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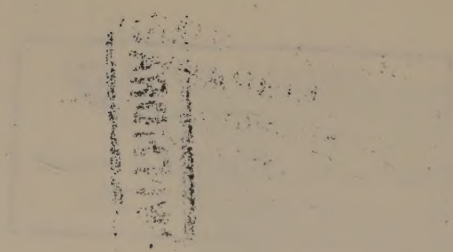
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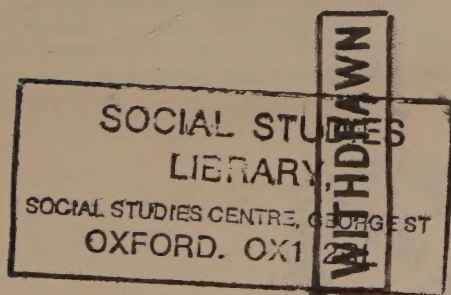
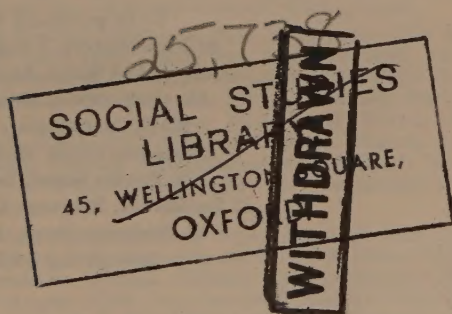


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# DOCUMENTS ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY

1918—1945



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1966

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DOCUMENTS ON  
GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY  
1918-1945

SERIES C (1933-1937)

THE THIRD REICH: FIRST PHASE

VOLUME V

MARCH 5-OCTOBER 31, 1936





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## DOCUMENTS ON GERMAN FOREIGN POLICY, SERIES C. VOLUME V

### ERRATA

Document No. 247, line 33 on p.368: *for* "But, they are, . . ." *read* "But, they add, . . ."

Document No. 281, p.436, second paragraph: *for* "the Chief of the Economic Defence Staff of the Reich." *read* "the Chief of the Economic Defence Staff of the Reich War Ministry."

Document No. 304, continuation of footnote 1 on p.500: *for* "Minister] von Papen . . ." *read* "Min[ister] von Papen . . ."

Document No. 451, footnote 4 on p.767: *for* "See Editors' Note, p.757." *read* "See Editors' Note, p.727."



## PREFACE

In June 1946, the British Foreign Office and United States Department of State agreed to publish jointly documents from the captured archives of the German Foreign Ministry and the Reich Chancellery. Although these archives went back to the year 1867, it was decided to limit the publication to papers relating to the years after 1918, since the object of the publication was "to establish the record of German foreign policy preceding and during World War II". The editorial work was to be performed "on the basis of the highest scholarly objectivity". The editors were to have complete independence in the selection and editing of the documents. Publication was to begin and be concluded as soon as possible. Each Government was to be "free to publish separately any portion of the documents". In April 1947, the French Government, having requested the right to participate in the Project, accepted the terms of this agreement.

It was originally intended to complete the entire publication for the period 1918-1945 in some twenty volumes. When, however, the preliminary work on the selections for the years 1933-1945 was completed in 1954, it became apparent that an adequate selection of the documents for this period would require a publication on a scale approximately double the size which had been expected at the outset. After considering the length of time it would take to carry out a programme on this scale, the participating Governments decided to limit the publication in English to the years 1933-1941, beginning on January 30, 1933, when Hitler became Reich Chancellor, and ending in December 1941, after the German declaration of war on the United States of America. The publication began with Series D, which comprises thirteen volumes. Series C (1933-1937) will be completed in six volumes.

This, the fifth volume of Series C, opens on March 5, 1936, on the eve of the German occupation of the Rhineland. It closes on October 31, 1936, after the signature in Berlin, on October 23, of the secret German-Italian Protocol and the initialling, on the same day, of the so-called Anti-Comintern Pact between Germany and Japan.

The documents included in the present volume have been selected jointly by the United States, British, and French editors, but the British editors have had editorial responsibility for this volume. The editors have exercised complete freedom in both the selection and editing of the documents in this volume. Readers should bear in mind that these documents are presented as a source book for the study of history and not as a finished interpretation of history. It has been the



aim throughout to keep any interpretative comment out of the footnotes.

The documents are printed in chronological order. A topical arrangement of the analytical list at the beginning of the volume is designed to help those who wish to read on particular subjects. For documents on Austria and Spain, from July 1936 onwards, readers are referred to Series D, volumes I and III respectively.

The documentation for the period covered by this volume is not altogether complete—see volume I of this Series, Appendix V. The secret files of the Legal Department are lacking (having been destroyed before the end of the war), as are the majority of the secret files of both the Political and Economic Policy Departments. Some of the files of the Office of the Reich Foreign Minister and some of the open files of the Economic Policy Department (for instance those on Russia, Poland, and some on Italy) are also missing.

Each document printed in this volume bears a microfilm serial and frame number in the upper lefthand corner. The microfilm copy of the original German text can be located by reference to Appendix II, "List of German Files Used". These microfilms are available to public research through the Public Record Office in London and the National Archives in Washington. The files of the German Foreign Ministry for the Weimar period, and for the years 1942–1945 (originally intended for coverage by Series A and B, and the latter part of Series D of this publication) were also systematically microfilmed before the return of the originals to the German Federal Republic; these microfilms are similarly available to public research.

The translations have been drafted by the British translating staff, but the editors have final responsibility for the translations as well as full responsibility for the footnotes and other editorial matter. For the principles which have guided the editors with respect to translations and other phases of their work the reader is referred to the "General Introduction" published in each of the first four volumes of Series D.

The British editors wish to express their gratitude to the former Librarian and Director of Research at the Foreign Office, Mr. R. W. Mason, C.M.G., the Deputy Librarian, Mr. C. J. Child, O.B.E., and the staff of the Library for their cooperation, and to Miss. C. W. Bedford, Miss P. M. Bragg, Miss V. Klein, Mr. J. N. Meinertzhagen, and Mr. D. A. R. H. Webster for their assistance in the preparation of this volume.

# ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS<sup>1</sup>

## AUSTRALIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 11	<i>An Official of the Consulate General at Sydney to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports was unable to induce Minister for External Affairs to accept German point of view on German action in Rhineland, and describes views prevailing in Government, Parliament and public opinion.	72	100

## AUSTRIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 11	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. to whom explained reasons for German action. Latter referred to idea of authoritarian States forming common defensive front and stated that Austrian Government intended proposing German-Italian-Austrian discussions on question.	80	108
Mar. 13	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Starhemberg about latter's recent conversation with Mussolini concerning proposal to form common front of authoritarian Powers against Bolshevism and Jewish democracy. Also comments upon significance of Austrian question in current London negotiations and reports conversation on subject with British Minister Selby, who has just been recalled to London.	90	125
Mar. 16	<i>The Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior to the Foreign Ministry</i> Enquires whether Foreign Ministry still see objection to transfer of Austrian SA units to Rhineland since restoration of full German sovereignty there.	132	175
Mar. 17	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with his Polish colleague, just returned from Warsaw, on Polish reactions to German denunciation of Locarno, and secret information on attitude of Czech Council of Ministers. Also reports views expressed by Austrian M.F.A. on latter's recent visit to Budapest.	139	182

<sup>1</sup> The documents in this volume have been arranged chronologically. For the convenience of readers who wish to trace topics through the volume the analytical list of documents has been arranged alphabetically by countries or regions. In addition five subject headings have been included: "Economic Policy", "General Policy", "Military Policy", "Naval Negotiations" and "Rhineland".

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 20	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Comments upon political development of Austrian working-class movements and upon activities of militant wing of Trade Union Federation, the Freiheitsbund. Recommends providing this organization with financial support for May Day rally and draws attention to advantage which could accrue to Germany in forthcoming London negotiations from appearance of an Austrian opposition movement such as Freiheitsbund.	172	224
Mar. 27	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports Austrian M.F.A., whom had informed of German views on Locarno, substantially confirmed Hassell's report (document No. 204; see under <i>Italy</i> ) on Italo-Austro-Hungarian conversations in Rome on March 20-23.	226	321
Apr. 1	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department II</i> Records information from Papen concerning latter's recent interview with Hitler; the suggested tripartite meeting of representatives of National Socialism, Fascism and Heimwehr to be postponed for time being.	246	366
Apr. 21	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports on favourable impression made by presence of German military delegation at Prince Eugene bicentenary celebrations; comments on Habsburg question, on certain changes in Austrian domestic political situation which may lead to exclusion of Starhemberg and, possibly, inclusion of representatives of National Opposition in Government at later stage. Speculates on significance of visit of former British Foreign Secretary, Sir Austen Chamberlain, to Vienna.	288	456
Apr. 24	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> States Vienna Legation unable to find any basis in fact for belief expressed by Yugoslav Minister President that Legitimist <i>putsch</i> in Vienna imminent and instructs as to German attitude to Habsburg restoration.	291	464
Apr. 24	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports has learned Schuschnigg displaying interest in possibility of introducing some members of National Opposition into his Government, and comments on possibilities thus offered. Requests that Austrian Nazi Party be ordered to stop forming terrorist groups within SA, in view of disastrous repercussions on Germany's present negotiations with Britain which new wave of terrorism in Austria must produce.	294	470
Apr. 25	<i>Captain Wiedemann to Obergruppenführer Reschny</i> Letter stating that Hitler most strictly forbids formation in Austria of terrorist groups within SA.	297	476
May 4	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports discussion with Federal Chancellor on possibilities of Austro-German reconciliation; question of whether inclusion of representatives of Austrian National Opposition in Government would be regarded by Hitler as expression of Austria's will to peace.	304	499



## AUSTRIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
May 6	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records conversation with Herr Hueber, who wished to convey to Foreign Minister that Prince Starhemberg striving to reach understanding with Germany for common struggle against Bolshevism and planning to meet Göring informally through good offices of Gömbös.	311	511
May 12	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Transmits report of big parade by Freiheitsbund, attended by Schuschnigg, which resulted in clashes with Heimwehr. Strongly recommends continued German financial support of Freiheitsbund.	319	530
May 13	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records that, at a conference on May 11 with Papen, Hitler decided that Schuschnigg's attempts at <i>rapprochement</i> should be followed up and that he himself would, if desired, have discussion with leading Austrian personage.	321	537
May 14	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Federal Chancellor following Cabinet reshuffle; Schuschnigg expressed determination to pave way for reconciliation with Reich and described future policy in this respect.	325	546
May 27	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports on further development of political situation in Austria; has had conversation with President of Senate and others at which programme drawn up for future course of Austrian Government in foreign and domestic policy; this to be discussed with Federal Chancellor by President of Senate.	351	584
May 30	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports conversation with Federal Chancellor on project reported in document No. 351, during which latter described three measures which he had already decided to adopt.	357	596
June 13	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria</i> Comments on Schuschnigg's proposal to discuss plans for German-Austrian reconciliation not with National Opposition but with Papen, and instructs Papen on language to be held.	369	621
June 14	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 369 and states has arranged with Glaise-Horstenau to discuss only German-Austrian political relations, leaving discussion of domestic policy questions to him.	371	623
June 19	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records conversation with Austrian Federal Chancellor, who communicated revised draft for a German-Austrian agreement (destined for publication) and read out draft for a Gentleman's Agreement (not for publication).	389	654
June 20	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Refers to rumours of preparations for Habsburg restoration in Austria, describes attitude adopted in German press, informs Embassy of recent negotiations between Austrian Federal Chancellor and members of National Opposition, and between German Minister in Vienna and Austrian Federal Chancellor, and instructs on language to be held at Foreign Office.	393	664

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
June 20	<i>The Austrian Federal Chancellor to the Minister in Austria</i> Refers to conversation recorded in document No. 389 and encloses draft for confidential oral statements to be made by himself and by German Minister.	395	667
June 24	<i>Minister Papen to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter stating that he has reported to Hitler directly concerning most recent conversation between Austrian Federal Chancellor and himself, at which Schuschnigg proposed proceeding by means of a short communiqué, for publication, regarding Austro-German reconciliation, and a confidential Gentleman's Agreement between the two Governments to settle points at issue. Encloses own drafts for these two items.	401	676
June 29	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria</i> Sends instructions concerning opening paragraph of proposed communiqué on German-Austrian relations for use in forthcoming conversation with Austrian Federal Chancellor. If German formula relating to right of self-determination cannot be obtained, recommends formula stating that German Government renew declaration that have no intention of interfering in sovereignty of Federal State of Austria.	407	696
June 29	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV</i> Records that two postponements of conversation between Papen and Austrian Federal Chancellor have provided time for amendments to Schuschnigg reconciliation programme, worked out in Foreign Ministry and approved by Führer, to be discussed and explained. Gives terms of amendments to Gentleman's Agreement proposed by Papen and information from the latter concerning views expressed by Schuschnigg.	408	696
June 30	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria</i> Informs of reports that Schuschnigg shortly being summoned to Geneva; expresses concern at probable French and Little Entente designs to frustrate attempt at reconciliation, and instructs that Schuschnigg's attention should be drawn to this danger.	410	700
July 1	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Federal Chancellor has declined invitations from representatives of Britain and France to go either to Geneva or Montreux and has expressed determination to bring Austro-German negotiations to speedy conclusion. Also reports formula agreed upon for opening paragraph of proposed German-Austrian communiqué.	415	710
July 2	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria</i> Refers to document No. 415 and objects to latest formula on German recognition of Austrian sovereignty for proposed communiqué as blocking any future possibility of <i>Anschluss</i> . Instructions to endeavour to return to previous formula as more satisfactory.	423	721
July 2	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 423, and cites, and requests approval for, new formula for point 1 of proposed communiqué designed to take account of German objections.	424	722

## AUSTRIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
July 3	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Reports conversation with Prince Starhemberg, who, in view of Olympic Games and in interests of further <i>détente</i> , intended to lift ban on Austrian athletes taking part in sports in Germany.	426	724
July 11	<i>Editors' Note</i> Terms of German-Austrian Gentleman's Agreement signed in Vienna on July 11 and of German-Austrian communiqué initialled on same day.		755
July 11	<i>Minister Papen to Senior Counsellor Kotze</i> Letter stating that Austro-German communiqué in revised form initialled and confidential Gentleman's Agreement signed. Describes arrangements made in Vienna for announcement and requests similar arrangements in Germany.	447	760
July 11	<i>Editors' Note</i> Conversation between German Ambassador in Rome and Mussolini and Ciano on July 11; text of instructions to Hassell of July 9.		761
July 16	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Letter reporting conclusion of German-Austrian Agreement and effect thereof on foreign policy and on internal affairs in Germany and Austria, and placing own post at Hitler's disposal.	455	772
Sept. 16	<i>The Ambassador in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned from Yugoslav Minister that, during recent meeting of Little Entente, President of Czechoslovakia proposed defensive alliance between France and Little Entente, but proposal frustrated by Yugoslav Minister President.  [See also vol. I of series D.]	540	972

## BALTIC STATES

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
May 15	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Lithuanian Minister, who enquired as to German attitude to British questionnaire and in respect of non-aggression pacts with other Baltic States. Discussion of German-Lithuanian relations.	329	552
June 17	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary and Head of the Presidential Chancellery</i> Records conversation between Hitler and new Estonian M.F.A. Hitler stated had no objections to non-aggression pact between Germany and Estonia.	378	633
July 8	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Lithuanian Minister who enquired as to position over non-aggression pact with Lithuania proposed by Führer, and as to German reply to British questionnaire; German-Lithuanian economic negotiations also discussed.	441	749



BALTIC STATES—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Aug. 18	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Announces German-Lithuanian Economic Agreements (dealing with reciprocal trade and veterinary questions, trade payments, regulations on labour and residence permits, and local frontier traffic) signed on August 5, whilst existing Treaty of Commerce and Navigation remains in force; states Lithuanian Minister in Berlin informed that conclusion of Agreements designed to promote German-Lithuanian political relations; assesses economic value of agreements.	512	912

## BELGIUM

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Mar. 7	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Records conversation with Belgian Minister President and Secretary General, with whom carried out instructions contained in document No. 3 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	14	31
Mar. 8	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 14, and reports has just been officially informed that Belgian Cabinet intend to bring matter before League of Nations. Comments on reasons for this decision.	27	49
Mar. 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 27 and comments upon attitude of Belgian Government, which is beginning to foster calmer mood amongst population.	57	84
Mar. 11	<i>Editors' Note</i> Official statement of Belgian attitude by Minister President on March 11.		99
Mar. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports explanation given him by Belgian Secretary General of statement contained in speech by Belgian Minister President that Belgium would request some compensation from other Locarno Powers for diminution of her security resulting from German occupation of Rhineland.	79	107
Mar. 17	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Reviews present position of Franco-Belgian military agreements in light of speech made by Belgian Minister President on March 11, and recommends stressing in conversations that, since new arrangements still envisage contacts between French and Belgian General Staffs, Belgian freedom of political decision must be regarded as doubtful.	143	186
Mar. 20	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Belgian Cabinet have approved London proposals of remaining Locarno Powers and gives salient features of speech by Minister President in Chamber.	167	219
Apr. 4	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Secretary General of Belgian Foreign Ministry concerning Belgian attitude towards German Peace Plan and towards exchange of Notes with British Government.	257	387

## BELGIUM—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
May 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records information from Belgian Minister that latter's Government approached by Netherlands Government for exchange of views on German proposal for a new Locarno.	349	583
June 20	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Belgium</i> Instructs Legation on language to be held with Secretary General of Belgian Foreign Ministry if matter of British questionnaire raised.	391	657
July 9	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from reliable source close to Belgian Minister President about Belgian attitude to new Locarno Conference.	444	752
July 18	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Belgium</i> Forwards memorandum containing information on aims and methods of leader of Belgian Rexist Party, and states Foreign Ministry do not intend to take up suggestion that Degrelle lecture in Germany.	460	786
Aug. 4	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits and comments on memorandum by Counsellor of German Legation on conversation with Belgian M.F.A. when question of renewal of Treaty of Locarno and Belgian foreign policy discussed.	494	867
Aug. 13	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records conversation with member of Belgian Rexist Party who asked for assistance in purchasing German printing machinery, requested an interview with Goebbels with view to arranging invitation to Rexist Party leader Degrelle, gave it as Rexist Party's view that Eupen-Malmédy question should be settled by plebiscite, stated his Party disinterested in German-Austrian question, and said his Party considered concessions should be made to Germany in question of colonies.	507	896
Sept. 6	<i>Counsellor of Legation Bräuer to Minister Richthofen</i> Letter stating leader of Belgian Rexist Party, Degrelle, anxious to meet leading Germans, and would like German Legation in Belgium to pave way for his visit by confidential statement of their views. Bräuer gives reasons why he personally would be in favour of Degrelle's being received by Goebbels and perhaps by Hitler.	527	947
Sept. 17	<i>The Head of the European Section of the Political Department to the Legation in Belgium</i> States Goebbels prepared to receive leader of Belgian Rexist Party, Degrelle, either between October 1 and 3 or after October 15.	543	978
Oct. 10	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on reactions of Belgian public and parliament to agreement concluded between Rexist movement and Flemish National Union.	581	1058
Oct. 10	<i>Counsellor of Legation Bräuer to Counsellor Rintelen</i> Letter forwarding memorandum concerning visit of Belgian personality to Berlin on September 26 and 27, together with (attached) observations on Rexist movement in connection with Eupen-Malmédy.	582	1059

BELGIUM—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 15	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 582 and reports on reactions of Belgian public to propaganda by Rexist movement and to agreement concluded between Rexist and Flemish National Union.	604	1091
Oct. 15	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports and comments on speech by King of Belgians to Council of Ministers concerning Belgian foreign and military policy.	606	1093
Oct. 16	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has informed Belgian Minister of communication of German reply (document No. 596, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ), and subsequent conversation.	610	1102
Oct. 27	<i>The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on article carried by <i>Le Matin</i> and other Belgian papers concerning alleged meeting between leader of Rexist movement and Goebbels.	629	1148
Oct. 28	<i>The Belgian Minister in Germany to the Acting State Secretary</i> Letter acknowledging receipt of text of German reply (document No. 596, enclosure) to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure), and transmitting copy of Belgian reply to British Memorandum.  [See also under <i>France, Great Britain, Italy and General Policy and Rhineland.</i> ]	634	1157

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 7	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. with whom carried out instructions contained in document No. 4 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	15	33
Mar. 9	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports departure of Minister President on brief visit to Vienna and concludes that failure to postpone visit indicates that Czechoslovak Government view situation tranquilly.	32	56
Mar. 9	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on deterioration of morale amongst Sudeten Germans since election of Beneš as President of Czechoslovak Republic.	44	70
Mar. 10	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin, who is visiting Prague, called on him after seeing President of State, Minister President and M.F.A., and expressed concern as to whether Czechoslovakia included in Hitler's offer to conclude non-aggression pacts with Germany's Eastern neighbours. Requests instructions.	55	83

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 11	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i> States that information from secret sources reveals with certainty that what Prague Government circles have been telling German Minister is very different from what they are telling their allies.	70	99
Mar. 12	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation* in Czechoslovakia</i> Refers to documents Nos. 15 and 56 (see under <i>Yugoslavia</i> ) and describes reports from absolutely reliable source that Czechoslovak Government have assured French Government of support in policy towards Germany and have proposed calling meeting of Little Entente Ministers to concert common policy designed to draw British attention to shattering effects of German action on security in Eastern Europe.	86	118
Mar. 14	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that possibility of application of sanctions against Germany causing concern in business circles in view of Germany being Czechoslovakia's largest supplier as well as her largest market.	120	157
Mar. 16	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Refers to documents Nos. 543 and 593 in vol. IV of this Series, and comments upon Czechoslovak Minister President's visit to Vienna which believed primarily designed to further Austro-Czechoslovak negotiations for commercial treaty; outcome appears not very successful.	129	168
Mar. 18	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon speech made by M.F.A. to joint session of Foreign Affairs Committees of Chamber and Senate concerning restoration of German sovereignty in Rhineland zone and German Memorandum.	148	194
Mar. 24	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records conversation with Czechoslovak Minister, who referred to assertions by Göring that airfields for Russian air force being prepared in Czechoslovakia and stated he had obtained formal assurances to the contrary from President Beneš.	205	282
Mar. 26	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information reaching Legation about conversation of March 6 between Czechoslovak State President and M.F.A., and Soviet representative, who proposed Czech-Russian military alliance.	220	307
Apr. 4	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with President Beneš who enquired as to compatibility of proposed non-aggression pact with his country's existing alliances, as to German views of Locarno Arbitration Treaty with Czechoslovakia, and as to form intended to be given to treaties with East European States.	256	385
Apr. 4	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Amplifies account given in document No. 256 of his conversation with President Beneš.	258	388
Apr. 8	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i> Refers to documents Nos. 256 and 258, and states reasons why at present moment discussion with Beneš of details of German Peace Plan, or of certain relevant issues in German-Czechoslovak relations, appears undesirable.	268	408



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Apr. 16	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews position of Czechoslovakia in present crisis in light of past history; discusses personality and probable policies of President Beneš; suggests Germany assist Sudeten Germans by having their legal position placed under international supervision.	284	439
May 29	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Requests that Ministry of Propaganda be prevailed upon to desist from publishing any reports about happenings within Sudeten German Party.	353	587
June 11	<i>The Head of the European Section of the Political Department to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i> States terms on which settlement of dispute in Sudeten German Party reached.	364	608
June 15	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV</i> Records Military Attaché of German Legation in Prague has brought (attached) letter from German Minister in Prague giving account of breach between Sudeten German Party leaders.	372	624
June 16	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Czechoslovak M.F.A., whom he questioned about recent meeting at Bucharest of Heads of State of Little Entente.	374	629
June 18	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on question of financial support for German community in Czechoslovakia, especially in respect of agricultural property, and proposes creation of fund for preservation of German landed property in Czechoslovakia.	382	640
July 6	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to information given by Czechoslovak M.F.A. to German Minister in Prague (document No. 374) concerning Rumanian intention of concluding with USSR pact similar to Czecho-Soviet Pact, and reviews available evidence as to accuracy or otherwise of this information.	432	735
July 15	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by his Austrian colleague of remarks made to latter by Czechoslovak M.F.A. Krofta on subject of German-Austrian agreement which, though not unexpected, had occasioned anxiety in Prague.	450	766
July 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on what has learned concerning recent visit by Henlein to London.	465	796
July 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Political Division IV</i> Records discussion between Henlein's representative and German officials; hopes expressed for an agreement among Sudeten Germans, and an end to constant statements and counter-statements in Sudeten German press.	480	830
Aug. 11	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Czechoslovakia</i> Refers to document No. 382 and forwards two memoranda concerning proposed establishment of fund for preservation of German landed property in Czechoslovakia, on which requests Legation's views.	505	891

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Aug. 14	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Henlein, who stated he was endeavouring to counter rumours among Sudeten Germans that Reich about to settle Sudeten question by force of arms, and described his efforts to gain sympathy for Sudeten Germans abroad.	508	898
Sept. 23	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires communicated (attached) <i>Note Verbale</i> protesting against remarks made in speeches at Nuremberg by Goebbels and Rosenberg about Russian military aid to Czechoslovakia. Has rejected protest.	550	989
Sept. 26	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV</i> Records leader of Sudeten German Party, Henlein, has requested that so-called political payments for Party be continued and reasons given for request.	559	1011
Oct. 9	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV</i> Records conversation with leader of Sudeten German Party, who described his plans for Party.	578	1053
Oct. 12	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Czechoslovak Minister, who referred to Czechoslovak <i>Note Verbale</i> of September 23 (document No. 550, enclosure), and gave assurance that Czechoslovakia neither was a Communist State nor permitted her policy to be directed by another State.	587	1063
Oct. 17	<i>The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports and comments on conversation with State President Beneš, who gave views on Austria, organization of Danubian region and Czechoslovak Minister President's wishes regarding economic action there, Hungarian revisionist aims, policy towards Russia, Goebbels' Nuremberg speech, own speech of August 19 on minority question, German-Czechoslovak relations, and impending Five Power negotiations.	614	1108

## DENMARK

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 9	<i>The Minister in Denmark to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 25 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has represented German views to M.F.A. who believed time for oral negotiations between Great Powers had come and that Article 16 of League Covenant must not be basis for Council deliberations.	38	62

## ECONOMIC POLICY

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Apr. 6	<i>Circular of the State Secretary and Head of the Reich Chancellery</i> Encloses text of decree by Hitler empowering Prussian Minister President Göring to take necessary measures to improve raw material situation; states decree to be treated as top secret and suggests formula for informing subordinate authorities.	260	393

## ECONOMIC POLICY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 July 30	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> States that, in view of recent upsurge in German economy, maintenance of imports of raw materials, and hence increase in exports of German goods, essential, and instructs Missions and Consulates General to promote German exports with all vigour.	485	842
Aug. 17	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> States that, since issue of last directive (document No. 22 in vol. iv of this Series), German economic policy has had task of: (1) supplying Germany with essential foreign raw materials and foodstuffs; (2) increasing export of German goods; (3) extending and improving economic agreements and adapting them to principles of New Plan. Reviews raw materials situation and current state of clearing system, and surveys Germany's economic relations with more important countries of Europe, America, Africa, and Asia.	511	901

## FAR EAST

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports upon attitude of Japanese press to Hitler's speech and recent German actions; describes Japanese fears of possible repercussions of Franco-Russian Pact on situation in Far East	59	86
Mar. 10	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department III</i> Records has learned from Secretary General of Export Consortium for War Material that sum of 100 million RM made available for proposed delivery of war material to Chiang Kai-shek comes from War Ministry funds.	64	91
Mar. 19	<i>The Ambassador in China to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Chiang Kai-shek has again referred, in conversation, to rumours of a German-Japanese understanding. Has again denied this.	155	201
Mar. 19	<i>The Ambassador in China to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Chiang Kai-shek about various commercial activities of Klein, whom Chiang stated he no longer trusted.	156	202
Mar. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with new Prime Minister, Hirota, on economic negotiations with Manchukuo, German action in Rhineland, and Japanese foreign policy.	195	264
Mar. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews and comments upon Japanese attitude to German action in Rhineland.	196	267
Mar. 23	<i>Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Bülow</i> Letter stating what is known to him of telegrams sent by his Military Attaché to Reich War Ministry concerning certain secret negotiations with Japanese, and commenting upon conduct of these negotiations.	197	271

## FAR EAST—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 24	<i>War Minister Blomberg to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek</i> Refers to complaints by Chiang Kai-shek of deliveries made by Klein to Canton, explains position over these deliveries and states that they are only made on basis previously approved by Chiang.	206	282
Mar. 25	<i>War Minister Blomberg to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter stating that views of German Ambassador in China and of Staff advisers, as expressed in document No. 156 (and in telegram cited in footnote 5 thereto), do not meet with approval of War Ministry, and requesting that German Embassy in Nanking be instructed accordingly.	217	304
Mar. 30	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department III</i> Records that, at conference with War Minister on March 26, Neurath rejected Blomberg's reproaches against German Ambassador in China (in document No. 217); other matters relating to Klein project also discussed.	235	341
Mar. 31	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department III</i> Submits to State Secretary communications dealing with possible repercussions, both economic and political, of Klein project, with comments thereon.	238	347
Mar. 31	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department III</i> Reviews probable economic, financial and political repercussions of Klein project.	239	348
Apr. 3	<i>Marshal Chiang Kai-shek to War Minister Blomberg</i> Telegram expressing confidence in plan proposed by Klein for economic cooperation between Germany and China, and requesting that negotiations with Chinese Commission be continued.	254	384
Apr. 8	<i>Credit Treaty Supplementary to the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods concluded between the Chinese Government and Herr Hans Klein on August 23, 1934</i> Provides for Chinese Government to receive from German Government commercial credit of 100,000,000 Reichsmark for purchase of German industrial and other products.	270	411
Apr. 15	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Minister</i> Refers to document No. 217; encloses copies of documents Nos. 206 and 254 and states that agreement for exchange of goods and credit agreement concluded on April 9; State-owned company "Hapro" founded to conduct exchange of goods.	281	436
Apr. 30	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature of German-Manchukuo Trade Agreement.		499
May 4	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with General von Reichenau who has been charged to go to China to confirm Klein's China agreements and make contacts with Chiang Kai-shek on these matters; expressed doubts to von Reichenau about wisdom of these Reichswehr enterprises in China.	306	502
May 19	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador to Japan</i> Records conversation with Reich War Minister about German-Chinese credit transactions and General von Reichenau's journey to China. Endeavoured to minimize damage to Germany's relations with Japan by proposing that von Reichenau visit Japan also, and that Japanese authorities be informed of project.	338	565



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
May 25	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Japan</i> Quotes terms of a letter he has addressed to von Reichenau, since has been unable to see him personally, strongly recommending that latter's visit to China should also include Japan in order not to prejudice German-Japanese relations.	346	579
June 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary and Head of the Presidential Chancellery</i> Records conversation between Hitler and Japanese Ambassador, when Japanese attitude to Germany, and question of combating Communism discussed.	362	603
June 10	<i>Ambassador Trautmann to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter stating has been received by Hitler and has seen Ribbentrop, and enclosing memorandum on state of German-Chinese relations.	363	604
June 19	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Japanese Ambassador about Klein expedition, General von Reichenau's visit to China, and Japanese relations with Canton Government.	386	650
July 18	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department</i> Records Japanese Ambassador has protested about contracts for deliveries of German goods to China, and reviews recent course of Sino-Japanese relations, courses of action now open to Japan, and policy indicated for Germany.	461	786
Aug. 4	<i>Counsellor of Legation Fischer to Minister Erdmannsdorff</i> Letter commenting on effects of the Klein transaction on business world, and on political situation.	495	869
Aug. 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Japanese Ambassador concerning the Klein treaties. Has characterized new treaty as relating solely to exchange of goods. Has rejected Ambassador's suggestion for reassuring statement in Tokyo.	502	886
Aug. 10	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division VII</i> Records conversation with Head of War Economy Staff concerning difficulties which had arisen in implementing Klein project; lists suggestions which has made for action to be taken by Colonel Thomas.	504	890
Aug. 16	<i>Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop</i> States has of late been in negotiation with Japanese Ambassador and Military Attaché in Berlin concerning Anti-Comintern Treaty and proposed political agreements. Points still to be discussed are question of publication of Anti-Comintern Treaty and question of wording of preamble to the two treaties.	509	899
Sept. 14	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in China to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from General von Reichenau concerning current state of Hapro discussions.	536	966

## FAR EAST—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Sept. 15	<i>Memorandum by the Head of the German Economic Mission to the Far East</i> Records conversation with Reich War Minister about results of Mission's journey to Far East, especially with regard to China and Klein transaction; Blomberg outlined principles which Reich War Ministry would in future observe in connection with Klein treaty.	537	968
Oct. 23	<i>Editors' Note</i> Initialling, in Berlin, by Ribbentrop and Japanese Ambassador, of so-called Anti-Comintern Pact and Supplementary Secret Agreement.		1138
Oct. 23	<i>German-Japanese Exchange of Notes on the Occasion of the Initialling of the Agreement Against the Communist International</i> Exchange of Notes relating to Annexes III and IV to the Supplementary Secret Agreement to the Anti-Comintern Pact.	625	1140
Oct. 30	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Japanese Ambassador who enquired about aspects of Italian M.F.A.'s visit to Germany, raised question of recognition of Manchukuo, and expressed hope that Japanese State Privy Council would accept Anti-Comintern Pact.	637	1160

## FRANCE

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador to whom he gave copy of German Memorandum on restoration of sovereignty in demilitarized zone (document No. 3, enclosure; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ); latter entered solemn protest at unilateral violation of Versailles and Locarno Treaties.	13	30
Mar. 7	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 3 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ), and reports that, in absence of M.F.A., has carried out instructions with Secretary General, Léger. Questioned by latter as to how present action was related to statements previously made by Hitler in interview with French journalist; requests instructions.	17	34
Mar. 8	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in France</i> Refers to document No. 17 and sends instructions on reply to be made to French enquiry.	24	46
Mar. 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Deduces from broadcast by French Minister President that whilst French Government already assured of certain amount of British support, they intend to push British further along desired direction by definitive formulation of French views.	37	61
Mar. 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that, during meeting of remaining Locarno Powers, French Minister President refused to discuss British suggestion for negotiations on German proposals.	58	86

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports his assessment of French Government's present attitude, and describes what has learned of meeting of remaining Locarno Powers in Paris on March 10.	73	100
Mar. 12	<i>The Military and Air Attaché in France to the Reich War Ministry</i> Reports on situation in France which, despite apparent calm, believes to be exceptionally serious and gives information on such troop movements as have been observed.	88	120
Mar. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that question of applying financial and economic sanctions against Germany being extensively discussed in France.	92	128
Mar. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from reliable source concerning attitude of various members of French Cabinet to present situation.	96	131
Mar. 14	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from reliable informant of projected solution for crisis under consideration by French Air Minister, Déat, and others. Project would involve extending Locarno to include Germany's eastern neighbours, and at first negotiating officially without Germany whilst unofficially keeping her informed.	108	147
Mar. 17	<i>The Embassy in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits message from Military and Air Attaché concerning imperative necessity of avoiding frontier incidents, especially in the air.	136	180
Mar. 17	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that, although public opinion remains calm, danger of war is increasingly mentioned and belief prevalent that frontier incidents would have unpredictable consequences.	137	181
Mar. 19	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon possible repercussions of domestic situation in France on foreign policy of Sarraut-Flandin Cabinet. Considers that, despite criticism of Government, French public opinion united in conviction that struggle against creation of <i>faits accomplis</i> vital matter for France.	153	199
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Reports informal conversation with French Ambassador who claimed that in previous conversations with him German intention of reoccupying Rhineland had been denied. Ambassador's views on legal position and on desirability of gaining time to allow passions to cool.	169	221
Mar. 23	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from well-informed source about current situation; view that, after having secured quick initial success in London, French Cabinet under less pressure and able to afford time for diplomatic negotiations behind scenes, provided Germany does not reject Locarno Powers' proposals wholesale.	187	252
Mar. 24	<i>The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that letters from his French relatives indicate that French public, in contrast to Government and press, urgently demanding acceptance of German offer of twenty-five-year pact.	198	274

## FRANCE—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 26	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records information from State Secretary of Reich Air Ministry concerning action already taken and about to be taken over case of two German airmen who had flown over Strasbourg on March 23.	218	305
Mar. 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on French views concerning Rhineland conflict.	225	320
Mar. 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on what has learned of attitude of French Government towards lifting of sanctions against Italy.	234	340
Apr. 2	<i>Circular of the High Command of the Army</i> Reviews troop movements and other measures undertaken by French Army High Command from March 7 to 31.	249	373
Apr. 3	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on reception by French press and public opinion of German Peace Plan.	250	376
Apr. 8	<i>Editors' Note</i> French Memoranda to the Locarno Powers (1) replying to German Memorandum of March 31 (document No. 242, see under <i>Rhineland</i> ), and (2) presenting French proposals for peace plan.		402
Apr. 8	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on reports by Mme. Tabouis that French Government propose to act independently and impose sanctions on Germany; has no confirmation of this.	265	403
Apr. 8	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned that French reply to German Peace Plan (document No. 242, see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) will be harsh, and discusses reasons for French reaction.	266	404
Apr. 8	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador concerning French peace plan. Ambassador not yet informed of final texts but drew special attention to constructive aspects of French memoranda.	267	405
Apr. 9	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation about French memoranda with French Ambassador, to whom he described French rejoinder to German Peace Plan as spiteful in tone and consciously based on false arguments.	271	413
Apr. 9	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Instructs Missions on arguments to be used in refuting the French Memorandum on the German Peace Plan.	272	415
Apr. 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses impact made upon French public opinion by German action in the Rhineland, reviews French policy, and speculates upon possible outcome.	273	421
Apr. 9	<i>The Military and Air Attaché in France to the Reich Air Ministry and Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that during past week question of "fortifications in Rhineland" has become crucial, examines reasons for this, and forecasts possible French reactions.	275	428



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Apr. 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Discusses the dilemmas confronting France in the Rhineland conflict, especially in French policy towards Italy, Britain, Central Europe and the Balkan States, the USSR and League of Nations.	289	459
Apr. 24	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Instructions for new German Ambassador in France on additional arguments to be advanced in conversations in Paris in support of German thesis on Rhineland crisis.	292	465
May 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador, who spoke of French elections and expressed view that it ought not to be assumed in Germany that it would be impossible to come to an understanding with Government of Left in France.	314	518
May 25	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records French Ambassador said he would regret it if German reply to British questionnaire not made before Whitsun, so that Blum Government compelled to express view on it in governmental statement.	345	579
May 31	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassies in France, Great Britain and Italy, and to the Legation in Belgium</i> States that French Government have proposed in customary form renewal of appointments of certain members of German-French Arbitration Commission, and explains reasons for German reply.	358	598
June 19	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador about views of Blum Government on negotiations on Rhineland with Germany, and about German rearmament.	387	651
June 19	<i>Ambassador Welczek to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter describing own reception in Paris upon taking up post there, and general French attitude and policy in respect of Germany.	388	652
June 30	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits account from German journalist Paul Scheffer of a confidential conversation latter has had with new French M.F.A., Delbos, who emphasized need for German-French conversations but deplored absence of German reply to British questionnaire which made any start impossible.	411	701
June 30	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments, for information of Missions, upon French Government's foreign policy statement of June 23, to which particular importance attached in Berlin. Encloses some observations on particular points in statement.	414	705
July 2	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to speech to League Assembly made that day by French Minister President and reports some remarks on purpose of speech and on French policy made by French Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Viénot. Also reports views on speech expressed by Polish and Hungarian Ministers.	422	720

## FRANCE—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
July 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador who expressed his Government's views that desirable for Germany to exercise moderating influence in Danzig conflict and to treat as favourably as possible commission with which League had charged Polish Government in respect of incidents on occasion of German cruiser's visit to Danzig.	437	744
Aug. 6	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reviews developments in French foreign policy in the two months since accession to power of Blum Government.	499	876
Aug. 26	<i>Minister Podewils to Counsellor Rintelen</i> Letter recounting gloomy description of internal situation in France given him by Deputy for Meurthe-et-Moselle, who also spoke highly of the new Germany and stated France's salvation could only be brought about by Hitler.	519	931
Oct. 6	<i>Reichsbank President Schacht to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff</i> Letter enclosing copies of exchange of letters with French Minister President about continuation of conversations regarding a European settlement, of scope of which Blum has informed British Foreign Secretary.	574	1046
Oct. 15	<i>The French Ambassador in Germany to the Foreign Minister</i> Letter transmitting copy of French reply to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	607	1095
Oct. 28	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with French Ambassador, who enquired whether Italian Ambassador's statements to him, that Italy and Germany had agreed to give up Western Pact plan as hopeless and considered League to be finished, were correct.  [See also under <i>Belgium, General Policy, Great Britain, Italy and Rhineland.</i> ]	632	1151

## GENERAL POLICY

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 5	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on peace appeal addressed to Abyssinian and Italian Governments by League of Nations Committee of Thirteen, and what has learned of origins of proposal.	1	7
Mar. 5	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Continuation of document No. 1. Reports denial of press reports that Anglo-French conversations taking place in Geneva to concert joint action in event of Germany violating Locarno Treaty, and gives account of Eden's views obtained from correspondent of <i>London News Chronicle</i> .	2	9
June 11	<i>Editors' Note</i> Plans for liaison between Foreign Ministry and Volks-deutsche Mittelstelle.		610

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
June 11	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Minister of Economics</i> Forwards and commends application by Deutsche Stiftung for monthly foreign exchange allowance together with detailed statement in support of application.	365	611
June 20	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits, for information and guidance on language to be held, memorandum on repercussions in Czechoslovakia and Rumania of Franco-Soviet and Czechoslovak-Soviet Pacts of Mutual Assistance.	392	658
June 30	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from reliable source on present state of negotiations on Locarno question; idea of despatching joint enquiry from Locarno Powers concerning German reply to British questionnaire (document No. 313, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) apparently now dropped but search continued for formula to make possible conversations with Germany.	412	702
July 3	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 412 and reports information from reliable source about course taken by Locarno conversations, and of discussions between British, French and Belgian representatives.	425	723
July 3	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meetings at Geneva from June 30 to July 3 of British, French and Belgian representatives to discuss Locarno question; communiqué announcing intention of holding further meeting.		727
July 7	<i>The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 425 and reports information from reliable source concerning possible extension to Germany of invitation to attend Locarno conversations.	435	742
July 20	<i>Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the Political Department</i> Records has sent Ribbentrop (attached) memorandum assessing new Convention on Régime of Straits from point of view of German interests and describing effects of Convention on position of Powers.	462	789
July 23	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting, on July 23, of remaining Locarno Powers (Britain, France and Belgium), and text of communiqué announcing their intention of arranging meeting of all five Locarno Powers with view to negotiating new agreement to replace Rhine Pact of Locarno; discussion may be widened to include other problems.		819
July 24	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records communication by French, Belgian and British diplomatic representatives of text of tripartite agreement and of almost identical Notes expressing hope for a favourable German reply to invitation to proposed Five Power Conference, and his own reply.	474	821
July 24	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter stating has informed Hitler of invitation to Germany to participate in proposed Five Power Conference, also that Papen's appointment as Ambassador to Austria to be announced as soon as arrangements completed.	475	822

## GENERAL POLICY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 July 31	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has informed British and French Ambassadors and Belgian Minister of German acceptance of Anglo-Franco-Belgian invitation to Five Power Conference. Italian Ambassador informed beforehand.	489	852
August	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Reviews general political situation, political position of Germany, German defensive capacity, and economic position of Germany; draws conclusions as to measures required; prescribes task of German army and of German economy.	490	853
Aug. 20	<i>Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter enclosing, as instructed, memorandum entitled "Observations on the Negotiations for a Western Pact" (dealing with (i) general scope of Conference programme; (ii) Western Pact in relation to French Treaties of Alliance; (iii) assumption, by individual parties to Western Pact, of obligations to render military assistance). Suggests memorandum might serve as basis for conversations at Berchtesgaden.	515	917
Aug. 28	<i>Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop for the Führer</i> Describes results of work on colonial question carried out, during past two years, by his Office, (1) abroad, in liaison with Foreign Ministry and Auslandsorganisation, and (2) at home, in liaison with Colonial Policy Office.	520	932
Sept. 9	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassies in France, Italy and Great Britain and to the Legation in Belgium</i> States French and Italian Ambassadors and Belgian Chargé d'Affaires have enquired about German attitude to approaching Western Pact negotiations, and gives details of questions put by them.	531	956
Sept. 16	<i>Circular of the Acting State Secretary</i> In connexion with press allegation of German desire to sabotage proposed Five Power Conference, reviews, for information and guidance on language to be held, course of events since July 1936, and adds that, since subject of Conference is to be new Western Pact to replace Locarno, question of including Russia cannot arise.  [See also under <i>Rhineland</i> .]	541	973

## GREAT BRITAIN

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Mar. 6	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports requested to call upon Eden that day; latter expressed appreciation of German attitude to projected bilateral naval agreement, and discussed possibilities of achieving closer cooperation between Germany, Britain and France; held Air Pact to be first stage for policy of understanding.	8	24
Mar. 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador to whom he gave copy of German Memorandum on restoration of sovereignty in demilitarized zone (document No. 3, enclosure; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ); latter described resultant situation as much more serious than that created by German re-introduction of universal military service.	12	29



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 3 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ), and reports has carried out instructions with British Foreign Secretary, prefacing <i>démarche</i> with statement that Reich Government accepted latest British proposals in naval negotiations. Eden's views on unilateral denunciation of voluntarily negotiated treaty.	21	41
Mar. 9	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Records telephone conversations with Ambassador in London; latter supplied with text of statement which Eden proposed to make in Parliament concerning conversation with German Ambassador on March 7 (document No. 21). German amendments to proposed statement telephoned to London.	31	55
Mar. 9	<i>Editors' Note</i> British Foreign Secretary's statement to Parliament on German action in sending troops into Rhineland.		56
Mar. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports informal conversation with British War Secretary and others on German action in Rhineland demilitarized zone.	33	57
Mar. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation between his Counsellor and Wigram of Foreign Office on consequences of German action in Rhineland; latter emphasized importance of Germany exercising restraint in immediate future.	35	59
Mar. 9	<i>The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich War Ministry</i> Reports conversation at War Office concerning German action in Rhineland, from which derived impression that British reaction much more violent than that which followed German resumption of military sovereignty.	43	67
Mar. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversations with Sir Austen Chamberlain and Lord Cecil, both of whom judged German action very severely.	47	75
Mar. 10	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Records telephone conversation with Ambassador in London, who described attitude of press and public opinion, and stated was constantly being asked why Austria and Switzerland not included in proposed German non-aggression pacts.	50	79
Mar. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Analyses attitude of various sections of British public to events of last few days.	66	92
Mar. 11	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Lord Lothian who proposed that Reich Government should declare that, whilst abiding by reoccupation of Rhineland, they would for time being rest content with this symbolic act and send no further forces nor move troops nearer French frontier.	74	102

## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 11	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been in indirect touch with Court and ascertained view prevailing there.	77	106
Mar. 12	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with British Foreign Secretary who was directed by British Cabinet to inform him of extreme gravity of situation. British suggestion that Hitler should spontaneously contribute to solution of crisis by declaring that during negotiations he would withdraw part of German troops, maintain Rhineland occupation only as symbolic gesture and construct no fortifications there.	81	110
Mar. 12	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Records instructions telephoned to German Ambassador in London on reply to be given in Hitler's name to Eden's suggestion reported in document No. 81.	84	114
Mar. 12	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 84 and reports has made communication as instructed to Eden, in presence of Halifax and Vansittart. British expressed disappointment at German assurances, as insufficient contribution to solution of crisis.	85	116
Mar. 12	<i>The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich War Ministry</i> Gives personal impressions of situation as seen from London; believes this to be much more grave than it may appear when viewed from Berlin.	87	119
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 85, reports that Eden has made public information given him, and comments upon probable British action should French remain intransigent and present Germany with ultimatum.	91	126
Mar. 13	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Message to Reich War Minister from three Service Attachés that consider it their duty to report they regard situation as exceptionally grave.	98	134
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with well known Germanophil French journalist, de Brinon, on current situation.	102	140
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Legal Adviser to Foreign Office on legal position under Treaty of Locarno arising out of German reoccupation of Rhineland.	103	141
Mar. 14	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Refers to document No. 98 and gives reasons for supposing economic sanctions under discussion in London.	109	149
Mar. 14	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Authorizes statement of strength of German troops in Rhineland in order to repudiate press exaggerations.	112	151

## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 15	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on general situation in which detects no relaxation of tension. Believes that, if French decide to resort to force and threaten to act alone, British will be forced to follow suit, but that Flandin's ultimate objective may be less to compel Britain into joint action against Germany than to obtain Franco-British military alliance.	122	161
Mar. 15	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Informs of confidential statement made, on his Government's instructions, by British Ambassador conveying British desire that German Chancellor accept League Council invitation, and instructs as to German representation at Council meeting.	124	163
Mar. 17	<i>Unsigned Note</i> Terms of communication given to British Ambassador, expressing German expectation that British will endeavour to bring about negotiations on German proposals.	135	180
Mar. 17	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records that Ambassador in London telephoned State Secretary and gave text of statement Eden proposed making in Council concerning British attitude to German proposals.	138	181
Mar. 17	<i>Major General Keitel to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter enclosing, on Reich War Minister's instructions, report of conversation between German General Staff officer and British Military Attaché concerning details of strength of German troops stationed in Rhineland zone, and strength of Landespolizei units there.	145	191
Mar. 18	<i>Minute</i> Information from London correspondent of <i>Berliner Tageblatt</i> concerning King's attitude to present crisis.	147	193
Mar. 19	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that on arrival had short conversation with Eden whom he left in no doubt that Germany unable to make further concessions.	152	198
Mar. 20	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports was asked to call, with Dieckhoff, on Eden and Halifax, who informed him of draft plan drawn up by Locarno Powers. Considers certain points unacceptable, and has fully reserved his attitude pending receipt of text of draft plan.	162	214
Mar. 21	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Expresses view that, with return of Flandin from London to Paris, European crisis, caused by French attitude towards remilitarization of Rhineland, has emerged from acute danger of war and entered new phase. Gives detailed account and analysis of first phase of crisis.	178	233
Mar. 23	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records telephone conversation with British Ambassador who enquired when Ribbentrop would return to London and conveyed British request that Germany should not simply reject proposals of remaining Locarno Powers but should make counter-proposals and a "gesture".	186	251

## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 23	<i>The Acting Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conviction growing in London that impossible to create zone occupied by foreign troops on German territory only, and comments on suggestions for German counter-proposal made by Lord Mottistone and others.	188	253
Mar. 25	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports communication of document No. 207 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and subsequent conversation with Eden and Cranborne; states has rejected Eden's proposal that Germany renounce construction of fortifications in Rhineland for duration of negotiations.	208	286
Mar. 25	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Eden, who stated British Cabinet had discussed (1) whether Britain should now start staff talks with France under terms of Locarno Powers' proposals, and (2) question of Germany's renouncing fortifications in Rhineland for duration of negotiations. States has himself opposed both proposals.	211	289
Mar. 25	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 178 and reports on state of British public opinion on Rhineland question.	212	293
Mar. 27	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on major debate on Rhineland crisis in House of Commons on March 26.	223	315
Mar. 27	<i>The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses parts of reports from German Military Attaché in London concerning conversations relating to Rhineland question with War Office officials and with Ribbentrop.	231	333
Mar. 28	<i>Minute by the Head of the Press Department</i> Records, for submission to Bülow and Neurath, directive to press on treatment of Eden's speech in House of Commons on March 26.	232	338
Mar. 30	<i>The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses part of report from German Military Attaché in London on conversation with General Dill concerning Anglo-French Staff talks.	236	342
Apr. 1	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports communication to Eden of document No. 242 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and ensuing conversation, at which Halifax and Wigram also present.	244	364
Apr. 2	<i>Editors' Note</i> British Government's presentation of letters to French and Belgian Governments concerning action to be taken should negotiations for new settlement fail.		367
Apr. 2	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Reviews situation in London after presentation of German Peace Plan (document No. 242; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	247	367



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Apr. 2	<i>Memorandum by a Member of the German Delegation in London</i> Lists questions likely to be put on German Peace Plan (document No. 242; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and suggests replies.	248	369
Apr. 3	<i>The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Eden on German Peace Plan (document No. 242; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and British intention of holding General Staff talks with France and Belgium.	251	377
Apr. 6	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy, to the Foreign Ministry and to Ambassador Ribbentrop (London)</i> Reports conversation with Liaison Officer at Admiralty concerning forthcoming Anglo-French-Belgian Staff talks.	259	392
Apr. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on Commons debate of April 6 as reflecting difficulties confronting Government and perplexity of members of all parties in existing international situation.	263	396
Apr. 8	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation held by his Counsellor, Bismarck, with Sargent of Foreign Office; latter's views on Italo-Abyssinian conflict and on repercussions of Locarno crisis on confidence in Europe.	269	410
Apr. 14	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Wigram of Foreign Office concerning decision taken at conference of Locarno Powers in Geneva that British Government should put certain questions to German Government concerning points in German Memorandum of March 31 (document No. 242; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	280	435
Apr. 21	<i>The Air Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich Air Ministry and the Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe</i> Reports authoritative information from British Air Ministry about General Staff talks held with France and Belgium.	290	463
Apr. 29	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Comments in detail upon objectionable features in British Blue Book: "Correspondence showing course of certain diplomatic discussions directed towards securing a European settlement", and instructs that German astonishment be expressed to British Foreign Office.	299	478
Apr. 30	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been able to obtain little information from Admiralty on General Staff talks, and describes what has learned from other sources. Analyses present British weaknesses from which deduces improbability of Britain adopting drastic attitude towards Germany.	303	494
May 4	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from Polish Chargé d'Affaires concerning latter's recent <i>démarche</i> to Foreign Office regarding proposed British questionnaire to Germany, and subsequent <i>démarche</i> by Russian Ambassador. Has learned from other sources that original Foreign Office draft considerably toned down.	308	505

## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
May 5	<i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Leeper of British Foreign Office concerning British questionnaire and possibility of German attendance at forthcoming League Council meeting in Geneva. British Government not intending to publish questionnaire for time being.	310	510
May 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador who called to communicate British questionnaire (annexed) and made certain oral observations.	313	513
May 9	<i>Circular of the State Secretary</i> Sends Missions copy of British questionnaire of May 7 (document No. 313, enclosure) and comments in detail upon it.	317	522
May 13	<i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Wigram of Foreign Office about meeting of three Locarno Powers in Geneva and about British questionnaire to Germany. Possibility mentioned of Hitler proposing visit of a British Minister to Germany to discuss questionnaire.	322	537
May 14	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation between Hitler and British Ambassador concerning British questionnaire and prospects of a German reply.	326	547
May 14	<i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Wigram of Foreign Office concerning German complaints of British Blue Book (see document No. 299).	327	549
May 20	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes what is known of course taken by Anglo-Franco-Belgian General Staff talks; considers outcome of little practical importance but that fact of talks being held at all constitutes a certain element of danger.	340	568
May 26	<i>Memorandum by Ambassador Ribbentrop</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador who expressed his Government's desire to receive German reply to British questionnaire (see document No. 313, enclosure) as soon as possible.	348	582
June 5	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records conversation with Deputy Editor of <i>The Times</i> on prospects for Anglo-German negotiations.	359	600
June 16	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador who enquired when Germany intended to reply to British questionnaire (see document No. 313, enclosure).	375	630
June 17	<i>The Chargé d' Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Records conversation on political situation with Wigram, who stated Foreign Office displeased about German delaying tactics; has replied that blame for situation lay in British questionnaire.	379	634

GREAT BRITAIN—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 June 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon impact on British public opinion made by failure of attempts to prevent Italian conquest of Abyssinia. Believes previous opposition to rearmament has largely disappeared but British still attached to League of Nations and collective security, which determined to reorganize. Importance attached to obtaining clear idea of Germany's attitude.	405	691
July 1	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Granville, Parliamentary Private Secretary to British Home Secretary, Simon, on subject of British foreign policy: Granville stated that majority of Cabinet and Parliament did not favour Anglo-French alliance.	416	711
July 1	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador on subjects of German attitude to British questionnaire, recent speech in Paris by British Secretary for War, British attitude at Montreux Conference on right of passage for Russian warships through Straits, and recent attacks by Danzig Gauleiter Forster on League High Commissioner in Danzig.	417	713
July 1	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with British Counsellor of Embassy who, in absence of British Naval Attaché, enquired whether reports of refortification of Heligoland correct.	418	715
July 4	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports confidential interpretation of Locarno Powers' communiqué given by British press chief to effect that, in face of French opposition, British representative succeeded in leaving open date for proposed conference in view of possibility of inviting Germany, should latter meantime reply to British questionnaire.	428	728
July 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Chargé d'Affaires, who renewed expression of his Government's concern at conduct of President of Danzig Senate Greiser before League Council at Geneva as likely to lead to further difficulties over Danzig question.	436	743
July 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 435 (see under <i>General Policy</i> ), adduces evidence to suggest that British Government opposing invitation to Germany to take part in proposed conversations between three remaining Locarno Powers, and discusses reasons for British attitude. Also adduces evidence that British Government seeking to lessen tension in Anglo-Italian relations.	446	753
July 15	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Sir Robert Vansittart about German-Austrian Agreement, German-Italian relations and proposed Anglo-Franco-Belgian conversations.	451	767
July 21	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has received from Foreign Secretary text of communiqué regarding proposed meeting of delegates of France, Belgium and Britain on July 23, and subsequent conversation.	463	793

## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
July 22	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Extract from letter, stating that Hitler wishes to postpone yet further, reply to British questionnaire of May 6 (document No. 313, enclosure).	466	798
July 23	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Political Department</i> Records telephone message from Ribbentrop (in Bayreuth) referring to document No. 451 and stating has instructed Chargé d'Affaires in London that saw no prospects in immediate Conference of Five; such Conference would require meticulous preparation, failing which it would prove abortive; considered only way to bring about Five Power agreement in West was by means of prior German-British understanding.	471	814
July 25	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Foreign Secretary concerning Anglo-Franco-Belgian communiqué, text of which Eden elucidated, and question of further procedure.	477	825
Aug. 16	<i>Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop</i> States that, after lengthy conversation regarding European situation with Sir Robert Vansittart, latter said he was in general in agreement with Hitler's views on future foreign policy as expounded by Ribbentrop.	510	900
Aug. 28	<i>Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop for the Führer</i> States, in connexion with Lord Lloyd's proposed attendance at Party Rally at Nuremberg, that Lord Lloyd has made no public utterance against Germany since his visit in 1933; attempt to be made to create breach in Right-wing Conservative front through him.	521	935
Sept. 4	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records visit by Lloyd George to Hitler on September 4.	526	946
Sept. 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Sir Robert Vansittart who communicated British Government's proposal that projected Five Power Conference take place in London in second half of October.	530	955
Sept. 10	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Refers to document No. 530 and records has caused German Chargé d'Affaires in London to be instructed to inform Sir Robert Vansittart that Germany still prepared to take part in proposed Five Power Conference, but surprised at apparent intention of omitting diplomatic preparation of Conference, although such preparation had been promised.	532	959
Sept. 16	<i>The Head of the Aussenpolitisches Amt of the NSDAP to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Submits text of notes by Major Dutton, revised by Schmidt, on observations by Hitler concerning colonial question, made during reception of British guests at Nuremberg.	542	975
Sept. 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Foreign Secretary who reaffirmed British view that diplomatic preparation of proposed Five Power Conference necessary, stated his Government had now decided to open diplomatic discussions and communicated (attached) Memorandum containing suggestions as to scope of Conference, upon which he commented in detail.	546	981



## GREAT BRITAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Sept. 19	<i>Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter forwarding copy of document No. 546 and enclosure thereto, commenting on British Note, and suggesting line to be followed in replying thereto.	547	985
Sept. 20	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to the Führer and Chancellor</i> Letter commenting on British Note of September 17 (document No. 546, enclosure), suggesting terms of German reply, and listing questions raised in Note on which clarity must be achieved at present stage: (1) Whether French to be allowed exception from mutual renunciation of war so that they may maintain their treaties of alliance, especially that with the USSR; (2) whether new Western Pact to be linked with League, like old Rhine Pact; (3) whether Germany should undertake guarantee obligations, and, if so, what obligations she should undertake.	548	987
Sept. 23	<i>Memorandum by the Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain</i> Reports conversation with Wigram about British internal politics, Geneva negotiations, proposed Western Pact, and situation in France.	552	999
Sept. 28	<i>Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Ambassador Ribbentrop</i> Letter discussing advisability of getting Craigie to visit Berlin, and commenting on drafting of German reply to British Memorandum on proposed Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure).	560	1012
Oct. 5	<i>The Acting Director of the Political Department to the Consulate at Geneva</i> Sends instructions on language to be held should member of British Delegation refer to treatment of question of publication of armaments expenditure in Third Committee (of League of Nations).	570	1031
Oct. 7	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Bismarck to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff</i> Letter describing conversation with Sir Robert and Lady Vansittart.	577	1052
Oct. 13	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Transmits, for communication on October 14, German reply to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure), and comments on enclosed German Memorandum for information and guidance on language to be held.	596	1075
Oct. 14	<i>Ambassador Ribbentrop to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff</i> Letter stating that, whilst has received copy of German reply (document No. 596, enclosure) has not been informed about preliminary work on German Note, and enquiring as to reasons for this.	601	1085
Oct. 28	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with British Ambassador, who enquired about recent negotiations with Italian M.F.A. and asked what Neurath thought would be fate of proposed Five Power negotiations.	631	1150
[See also under <i>Belgium, France, General Policy, Italy, Naval Negotiations, Rhineland and Union of South Africa.</i> ]			

## GREECE

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that joint communiqué which Titulescu caused Little and Balkan Ententes to draw up has appeared in Greek paper <i>Estia</i> . Has protested to Greek Ministry of Foreign Affairs that, in view of repeated official declarations that Greece would accept no obligations outside Balkans, communiqué is incomprehensible. *	97	133
Mar. 14	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records conversation with Greek Minister who stated on his Government's instructions that Greek Government had no intention of abandoning neutral attitude towards Locarno dispute.	110	149
June 18	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on visit to Athens of Reich Minister of Economics; form taken by visit, Schacht's audience with King, his conversations with Greek Minister President and with Governors of Bank of Greece, reaction of Greek press to visit, and general repercussions of visit.	383	642
July 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Greek Minister President concerning German-Italian relations; Metaxas evinced relief on being assured that no German-Italian political agreement existed.	482	832
Aug. 7	<i>Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Counsellor of Legation Kordt</i> Letter referring to document No. 482, commenting on statements made by Kordt to Greek Minister President, and enjoining caution in future conversations.	501	885

## HUNGARY

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 9	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 7 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports views of M.F.A., to whom has communicated German memorandum (document No. 3, enclosure; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ); latter already informed through Hungarian Minister in Berlin.	36	60
Mar. 10	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister who enquired whether his Austrian colleague was correct in assuming Austria included in German offer of non-aggression pacts in East.	63	91
Mar. 16	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister who enquired whether proposed non-aggression pacts with Germany's Eastern neighbours, on model of German-Polish pact, were to run for ten years only whereas proposed new Locarno in West was to run for twenty-five years. Hungarian Government, in view of inclusion of Czechoslovakia, would prefer ten-year duration. Minister also spoke of Austrian Federal Chancellor's visit to Budapest and of Minister President Göring's attempts to improve Hungary-Yugoslav relations.	130	171

## HUNGARY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister, whose information on object of meeting between Rome Protocol Powers coincided with that received from Rome. Minister also spoke of Göring's efforts at mediation between Hungary and Yugoslavia.	171	223
Mar. 31	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records Hungarian Minister enquired as to German views on Italo-Austro-Hungarian conversations in Rome, March 20-23, and own reply.	237	346
Apr. 3	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister concerning German attitude to conference of Rome Protocol Powers, introduction of conscription in Austria, and reception accorded German Peace Plan.	253	383
Apr. 25	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister, who expressed his Government's concern at possible effects on Hungary of Flandin Peace Plan and proposed German non-aggression pact with Czechoslovakia. Hungarian proposal that Germany join Rome Protocols also discussed.	296	473
May 4	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister who requested reply to questions contained in document No. 296. Minister confirmed that questions put on official instructions.	305	500
May 12	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 296 and 305 and comments upon reasons which may have led to these two Hungarian démarches.	320	534
June 30	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Hungarian Minister on question of Hungary's equality of rights. Minister also enquired as to German-Italian relations and stated had been instructed by Hungarian M.F.A. to suggest conclusion of German-Italian treaty of reciprocity.	413	704
Aug. 24	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation between Hitler and Regent of Hungary, part of which conducted in presence of Reich War Minister and Foreign Minister. On Regent's expressing desire to help overcome remnants of tension between Mussolini and Hitler, was told closest harmony already restored. Regent raised question of Austria and described state of Hungary's relations with Czechoslovakia, with Rumania, and with Yugoslavia.	516	925
Sept. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records that, during stay in Budapest, discussed minority question with Hungarian M.F.A., Deputy Minister President, and Minister of Interior; it was agreed that competent Hungarian Ministers should discuss with German Minister in Budapest basic principles for treatment of German minorities in Hungary.	555	1005
Sept. 25	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records conversation with Regent of Hungary about Habsburg question.	556	1006

## HUNGARY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 12	<i>The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned from Göring that, during his stay in Budapest, latter discussed with Darányi (Deputy Minister President and Minister of Agriculture) question of increased Hungarian exports of foodstuffs to Germany in return for increased exports to Hungary of products of German armament industry.	589	1066
Oct. 16	<i>Minister Mackensen to Senior Counsellor Clodius</i> Letter describing action taken in connexion with negotiations for purchase of Hungarian grain.  [See also under <i>Austria and Italy</i> .]	612	1104

## ITALY

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 5	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 603 in vol. iv of this Series, and encloses copy of memorandum, given him by Suvich, on salient points in conversation between Mussolini and German Ambassador on February 22, 1936.	5	20
Mar. 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador, to whom he gave copy of German Memorandum on restoration of sovereignty in demilitarized zone (document No. 3, enclosure; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and whom he informed that, in event of Germany returning to League of Nations, she would not take part in sanctions against Italy in connexion with Italo-Abyssinian dispute.	11	29
Mar. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 3 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has carried out instructions with Mussolini. Latter considered German proposals went much too far.	18	36
Mar. 8	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to document No. 18, adduces arguments showing advantages accruing to Italy from German action in Rhineland, and points out that, since Germany did not exploit situation arising from Italo-Abyssinian dispute to Italy's disadvantage, is entitled to expect that Italy will not exploit present situation against Germany.	26	48
Mar. 8	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Suvich who informed him that Locarno Powers summoned to meet in Paris and of instructions to Italian representative to maintain attitude of reserve there.	28	50
Mar. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports further conversation with Mussolini, to whom made representations in sense of document No. 26. Latter expressed hope that Germany would not return to League of Nations before Abyssinian dispute settled. Suggests he be authorized to give assurance that Germany's return to League still long way off.	41	65



## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 9	<i>Ambassador Hassell to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Comments on conversation with Mussolini reported in document No. 18 and regrets Mussolini not informed earlier of proposed offer that Germany return to League.	45	71
Mar. 10	<i>The Acting Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Italian representative has endeavoured to ascertain whether Germany will be represented at forthcoming League Council and strongly advocated this course. Comments upon views prevailing in Geneva concerning German action in Rhineland.	51	80
Mar. 10	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to document No. 41, and instructs that not desirable to give Mussolini any assurances as to Germany's return to League being far distant.	54	82
Mar. 11	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that initial Italian surprise at Germany declaring herself prepared to return to League now appears to be succeeded by certain degree of calm. Suggests he be authorized to state officially that, in event of her return to League, Germany would oppose sanctions and support Italy.	75	104
Mar. 12	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments further upon Italian attitude to German Memorandum; considers Mussolini still undecided and anxious to keep all possibilities open.	89	123
Mar. 13	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Authorizes official statement to Italian Government that British and Italian Governments simultaneously informed of German action in Rhineland; no prior consultation with British; further, that Germany will not adopt anti-Italian attitude upon return to League and expects Italy to resist application of sanctions against Germany.	94	130
Mar. 14	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 94, and reports has held language accordingly with Suvich. Latter gave assurance that Italy would not be party to any resolutions liable to provide basis for sanctions against Germany.	113	151
Mar. 14	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who furnished text of instructions given Italian Ambassador in London on attitude to be adopted towards sanctions. Ambassador expressed wish to have Italian attitude receive recognition in German press.	117	155
Mar. 17	<i>Ambassador Attolico to State Secretary Bülow</i> Letter enclosing formula, which believes to be most recent one, defining Italian attitude to question before League Council of determining whether German action in Rhineland constitutes breach of treaty.	146	193
Mar. 18	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Italian concern over Anglo-German cooperation is increasingly apparent; fear prevalent that, once German case settled, Britain will bring up Abyssinian question again and that Britain endeavouring to obtain Anglo-Franco-German agreement.	149	195

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 19	<i>Ambassador Hassell to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter referring to document No. 149, and commenting in more detail on Italian attitude as therein described.	161	206
Mar. 20	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Suvich about policy being pursued by Italy at League Council meetings in London: Suvich stated Italy maintaining position of reserve.	164	216
Mar. 20	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 129 (see under Czechoslovakia), and reports conversation with Suvich on politico-economic plans in Danubian region. Latter stated Italy not at present inclined to join any form of new combination.	165	217
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador to whom complained of action of Italian representative in London in agreeing, contrary to previous Italian assurances, to proposals of remaining Locarno Powers.	170	222
Mar. 21	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who conveyed message from Mussolini concerning Italian attitude to proposals of remaining Locarno Powers in London negotiations, possibility of coordinating German and Italian attitudes, and Italian intentions in forthcoming meeting with Hungarians and Austrians. Ambassador's own proposals for compromise over Rhineland problem.	174	229
Mar. 21	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Gives terms of message to be conveyed on Hitler's instructions to Mussolini, by at latest March 23, on German attitude to resolutions of remaining Locarno Powers and expressing hope that Italian Government will spontaneously reject as impossible demands made on Germany in respect of three points: Acceptance of ruling by Hague Court; occupation of neutral zone on German territory by foreign troops; supervision of measures required of Germany.	177	232
Mar. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 164 and comments upon attitude of Italian Ambassador in Paris which appears inconsistent with statements made by Suvich to German Ambassador in Rome. Believes Cerruti hinting to French that Italy would incline further to French view in return for French support over question of lifting sanctions.	180	242
Mar. 22	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador to whom again confirmed that Germany would reject entirely proposals of remaining Locarno Powers. Ambassador's assurances as to attitude of Mussolini.	184	247
Mar. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on conversation with Hungarian Minister President and M.F.A. with whom discussed German objections to proposals of remaining Locarno Powers and Mussolini's attitude. Subsequently had conversation with Mussolini who undertook to act in accordance with German wishes.	185	248

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Hungarian M.F.A. concerning Italo-Austro-Hungarian conversations just concluded. Latter commented upon terms of Additional Protocols signed previous day in Rome and referred to possible extension of Rome Protocols to include Germany and Poland. Kánya also expressed hope that German-Austrian understanding would be reached.	204	279
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has informed Italian Ambassador of contents of document No. 207 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and subsequent conversation.	209	288
Mar. 26	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Suvich, of whom has made enquiry, that Italian statement of views on Locarno Powers' proposals of March 19 not yet communicated to Locarno Powers; has informed Suvich of German views on desirability of Italy's making such statement in sense favourable to Germany.	219	306
Apr. 1	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who had received provisional French translation of German Peace Plan (document No. 242; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and desired explanation of German expression of willingness to return to League of Nations.	243	363
Apr. 3	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who communicated statement (attached) on Mussolini's attitude to German proposals. Ambassador complained of alleged statement by unnamed German personage that <i>Anschluss</i> question merely temporarily shelved.	252	382
Apr. 4	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that statements made by Mussolini to Reich Commissioner of Justice, Frank, and by other political personages, all agree as to Italian intentions in respect of proceedings of Locarno Powers.	255	385
Apr. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits memorandum from reliable informant describing recent attempts by France and Russia to induce Italy to adopt anti-German policy.	274	426
Apr. 16	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 274 and transmits further memorandum by confidant therein mentioned of conversation between Mussolini and Russian Ambassador on April 6.	282	437
Apr. 16	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from reliable source as to questions on Italy's attitude in Rhineland negotiations put by French to Italian representative at Geneva a week previously.	283	438
Apr. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who showed him in confidence telegrams from Italian Ambassador in France, one of which contained unflattering remarks attributed to Field Marshal Blomberg concerning Italian conduct of war in Abyssinia.	295	472

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Apr. 27	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to documents Nos. 274 and 282 and encloses report from reliable source of conversation in Quai d'Orsay between French Secretary General and Italian Ambassador concerning offer from Mussolini to hold Staff talks with France in return for French assistance in raising sanctions against Italy.	298	476
May 8	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Aloisi who denied reports of Anglo-Italian exchanges concerning settlement of Abyssinian question and of French <i>démarche</i> on subject.	315	519
May 8	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits memorandum from reliable confidant concerning a conversation held about a week previously between King of England and Italian Ambassador in London.	316	521
May 10	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Describes occasion of proclamation of Italian annexation of and Empire over Abyssinia; reports is seeking early interview with Mussolini and requests instructions for discussion of British questionnaire (document No. 313, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	318	529
May 14	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Suvieh concerning Italian policy towards the League of Nations and the Government reorganization in Austria.	324	544
May 15	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records information from Italian Ambassador concerning decision by Mussolini to effect Italian withdrawal from League of Nations.	330	554
May 19	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Conveys information from absolutely reliable source of confidential contacts between the Italian and Soviet Governments during Abyssinian conflict.	334	560
May 19	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy</i> States that State Secretary has enquired of Italian Ambassador whether latter's communication of Italian decree on annexation of Abyssinia also intended as notification of annexation, which Ambassador denied. Sends instructions on German policy concerning question of recognizing Italian annexation.	335	562
May 20	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to document No. 318 and sends instructions for forthcoming conversation with Mussolini concerning Abyssinia, Austria, and British questionnaire (document No. 313, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	339	567
May 22	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from a reliable source concerning Prince Starhemberg's conversation with Mussolini during Prince's visit to Rome in previous week. Believes Mussolini does not intend to drop Starhemberg entirely and still considers his return to Government possible.	343	574
May 23	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 339 and reports conversation with Mussolini.	344	575



## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
May 27	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> States Italian Ambassador informed by his Government that King of Rumania has reliable information of proposal made by Blum, future French Minister President, concerning possible application of sanctions against Germany.	350	583
May 28	<i>The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy</i> Sends instructions to complain to Mussolini concerning Italian treatment of German-Italian economic relations and states conditions on which Germany prepared to negotiate.	352	585
May 29	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Suvich as to possibility of Italian initiative for settlement of conflict over Abyssinia.	354	588
June 6	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Suvich who stated that, during Mussolini-Schuschnigg conversation on June 4, question of German-Austrian <i>rapprochement</i> discussed, and gave Italian views on subject.	360	601
June 12	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division II</i> Records conversation between Hitler and Ambassador Hassell concerning question of recognizing annexation of Abyssinia, and recognising Manchukuo, with possibility of demanding Italian recognition of German action in Rhineland in return; comments on possible repercussions of such action.	368	619
June 13	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Believes it necessary to ascertain whether Italians attach importance to German recognition of annexation of Abyssinia, considers possible repercussions of such recognition and suggests that it be postponed till after League of Nations Assembly has met.	370	622
June 17	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Instructs Ambassador that, during forthcoming conversation with Italian M.F.A., he is merely to indicate that impression prevails in Germany that Italian Government do not attach great importance to recognition of annexation of Abyssinia.	377	632
June 18	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 377 and reports first conversation with new Italian M.F.A. when political situation discussed, including question of recognition of Italian annexation of Abyssinia, and describes background to recent changes in Italian Cabinet.	381	637
June 18	<i>Editors' Note</i> Decision by British and French Governments to discontinue sanctions against Italy in event of League of Nations deciding to do so; recommendations in this sense by League of Nations Assembly on July 4 and by Coordination Committee on July 6.		639
June 20	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 381 and suggests that when decision reached as to Germany's recognizing Italian annexation of Abyssinia, authorization be given to convey positive reply to Italian M.F.A.'s question as to whether Italy could expect benevolent German attitude when question becomes acute.	390	656

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
June 23	<i>The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conclusion of recent German-Italian trade negotiations, and terms of agreement.	398	672
June 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon Italy's position on eve of League Council session at Geneva, on basis of conversations with Under Secretary of State Bastianini and Propaganda Minister Alfieri, supplemented by information from reliable confidant.	403	685
June 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 393 (see under <i>Austria</i> ) and gives reasons for believing that Italy has not consented at present to restoration of Habsburgs. Also reports conversation with Austrian M.F.A. on German-Austrian relations, on which latter spoke in terms similar to those repeatedly employed by Mussolini.	404	689
June 30	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has carried out instructions with Ciano and informed him that Hitler will, as desired, adopt benevolent attitude to question of recognition.	409	698
July 8	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador who enquired as to Germany's attitude to Locarno negotiations and stated his Government had not yet decided upon Italian participation. Ambassador also spoke of Italian attitude to Montreux Conference.	442	750
July 17	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on main aspects of Italian foreign policy: Effect of German-Austrian Agreement, views on possibility of formation of German-Austrian-Italian-Hungarian bloc, possibility of German-Italian understanding regarding South East Europe, Anglo-Italian, Franco-Italian and Russo-Italian relations, Mediterranean problem, Dardanelles question, and attitude towards Turkey.	457	774
July 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Italian M.F.A. who stated views on proposed Five Power Conference and expressed anxiety as to state of affairs in Spain.	478	828
July 25	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has informed Italian M.F.A. of German desire to replace German Legation in Addis Ababa by Consulate General. Ciano expressed gratification.	479	829
July 29	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> States Germany intends shortly to reply in affirmative to Anglo-Franco-Belgian invitation to Five Power Conference, gives terms of German acceptance, and desires that Italian Government be informed accordingly.	484	840
July 31	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has informed Italian M.F.A., as instructed in document No. 484, of German intention of accepting Anglo-Franco-Belgian invitation to Five Power Conference, and gives terms (which he discussed with Ciano) of Italian acceptance.	487	849

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
July 31	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 487 and reports telephone conversations with Italian M.F.A. concerning terms of German and Italian replies to Anglo-Franco-Belgian invitation to Five Power Conference.	488	851
Aug. 31	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to document No. 457, and comments, for information and guidance on language to be held, on question of Italo-German understanding on economic policy in Danubian region.	523	936
Sept. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Italian M.F.A. about proposed Five Power Conference, League Secretary General's visit to Rome, meeting between Under Secretary of State Bastianini and Chief of Polish General Staff, <i>démentis</i> regarding Italian willingness to admit Russia to Five Power Conference, etc.	533	960
Sept. 17	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on effects on Anglo-Italian relations of King of England's tour of Mediterranean and other events.	545	980
Sept. 23	<i>Unsigned Notes</i> Handwritten notes on conversation with Mussolini.	553	1000
Sept. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Chargé d'Affaires who stated Italian M.F.A. wanted invitation to visit Germany for personal exchange of views before meeting of States signatories of Rome Protocols.	554	1004
Sept. 26	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Ambassador in Italy</i> Gives instruction on language to be held with Italian Government before Germany makes reply to British Memorandum on proposed Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	558	1008
Sept. 30	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador, who stressed importance of establishing a uniform line on British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) before Italian M.F.A. visited Berlin.	561	1013
Sept. 30	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador about proposed visit of Italian M.F.A. to Berlin. Ambassador thought a communiqué would have to be issued on main points discussed during visit, i.e., (1) recognition of incorporation of Abyssinia into Italian Empire, (2) certain agreements to be made concerning Italian and German relations with League, (3) establishment of common defence front against Bolshevism, (4) Italian and German attitude to proposed new Five Power Pact.	562	1015
Oct. 3	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 558 and reports has given Italian M.F.A. formal invitation to visit Germany, which was accepted, and subsequent conversation.	568	1027

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LI

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 5	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 568 and reports conversation with Mussolini about German and Italian relations with League, question of recognition of National Government in Spain, coordination of German-Italian economic policy in Danubian Basin, and British Memorandum on proposed Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	572	1041
Oct. 12	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 572 and 523, and reports has communicated to Italian M.F.A. <i>Pro Memoria</i> (not printed) on question of Italo-German economic policy in Danubian region, which Ciano undertook to examine in connexion with his forthcoming visit to Berlin.	583	1061
Oct. 12	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Sends instructions to inform Italian M.F.A. that German reply to British Memorandum on proposed Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) to be communicated in London very shortly.	585	1062
Oct. 12	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 534 (see under <i>Yugoslavia</i> ) and 572 and states Mussolini has informed German Ambassador in Rome that, though Italo-Yugoslav relations had improved and goodwill existed on Italian side regarding economic policy, Italy was to some extent committed to Hungary in respect of policy towards Yugoslavia.	586	1063
Oct. 12	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian Ambassador about forthcoming visit of Italian M.F.A. to Berlin; agreed that points to be discussed during visit ((1) joint line on Five Power Conference, (2) recognition of Italian annexation of Abyssinia, (3) agreement on attitude to be adopted towards League, (4) Italian support of German wishes over colonies and raw materials, (5) agreement on economic cooperation in Danubian region) would be laid down in a protocol which should not be published.	588	1065
Oct. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports two conversations with Italian M.F.A. about latter's forthcoming visit to Berlin; Ciano gave his views on treatment of points to be discussed during his visit in communiqué and internal protocol.	593	1072
Oct. 13	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to and comments on document No. 593.	595	1074
Oct. 14	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to documents Nos. 572, 583 and 593, and gives text of German proposals for drafting of economic portion of internal Berlin protocol which it is proposed to draw up on occasion of Italian M.F.A.'s visit.	597	1079



## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 14	<i>Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy</i> Records telephone conversation with acting Director of Political Department, who stated that, since France now known to have replied to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ), it had been decided to communicate German reply (document No. 596, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) that day, and gave Hassell instructions on language to be held in view of Italian attempt to cause communication of German reply to be postponed.	599	1082
Oct. 14	<i>Minister Mackensen to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter enclosing memoranda on what has learned from Göring about latter's conversation, during his stay in Budapest, with Italian M.F.A. and Austrian Federal Chancellor.	600	1083
Oct. 15	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 585 and reports conversation with Italian M.F.A., whom informed of German decision to reply to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ), and to whom communicated substance of document No. 595. Ciano communicated three drafts in connexion with his forthcoming visit to Berlin: (1) for announcement about Hitler informing him of German recognition of annexation of Abyssinia, (2) for a final communiqué, (3) for internal protocol on points discussed.	602	1086
Oct. 15	<i>The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation in Austria</i> States that reports of Italo-Czech efforts to include Little Entente in economic arrangements of Rome Protocols have been strongly denied by Italian M.F.A., but, since Italy seeking improved relations with Yugoslavia and Rumania, instructs Legation to seek information from Yugoslav colleague. Adds, for information, that German-Italian agreement over economic policy in Danubian region likely to be reached during Italian M.F.A.'s visit to Berlin.	603	1090
Oct. 16	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy</i> Refers to document No. 602 and makes counter-proposals regarding drafting of internal protocol on points discussed during visit of Italian M.F.A. to Berlin.	608	1100
Oct. 17	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports outcome of negotiations with official of Italian Foreign Ministry and Italian M.F.A. regarding German counter-proposals for drafting of internal protocol on points discussed during visit of Italian M.F.A. to Berlin.	613	1106
Oct. 19	<i>The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits text of Italian reply to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	617	1120
Oct. 20	<i>Editors' Note</i> Drafts prepared in the Foreign Ministry for the forthcoming conversations with the Italian M.F.A. in Berlin.		1122
Oct. 21	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Italian M.F.A. about points to be included in, and form to be taken by, proposed internal protocol.	618	1125

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIII

## ITALY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 22	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records that, during conversation with Italian M.F.A. on October 22, Italo-Polish relations, Danzig question, Italo-Turkish, Italo-Greek, and Italo-Yugoslav relations discussed.	620	1132
Oct. 22	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records that during conversation with Italian M.F.A. on October 21, question of recognition of Manchukuo discussed.	621	1133
Oct. 23	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has raised Memel question with Italian M.F.A., to whom pointed out that Italy's attitude hitherto not friendly towards Germany.	622	1133
Oct. 23	<i>German-Italian Protocol</i> Protocol (confidential and not designed for publication) recording agreement between German and Italian Governments on: (1) cooperation in Western Pact negotiations, (2) consultation over Italian relations with League, (3) attitude towards Communism, (4) <i>de facto</i> recognition of Spanish Nationalist Government, (5) continuation of recent policy regarding Austro-German relations, (6) German-Italian understanding before, and joint line at, any international conference on economic and financial questions, (7) cooperation over German colonial aspirations and supplies of raw materials, (8) cooperation over conduct of commercial policies in Danubian region, (9) extension, on occasion of German recognition of annexation of Abyssinia, of number of Italo-German economic agreements to Italian colonies and possessions.	624	1136
Oct. 24	<i>Editors' Note</i> Reception of Italian M.F.A. by Hitler at Berchtesgaden.  [See also under <i>Belgium, France, Great Britain and General Policy and Rhineland.</i> ]		1141

## LATIN AMERICA

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 9	<i>The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 7 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports that, before receipt of these instructions, had already had conversation with M.F.A. who spontaneously expressed sympathy with German action. Subsequently, when instructions formally carried out, found M.F.A. more guarded; comments on probable reasons.	34	58
Mar. 11	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Argentina to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 25 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has carried out instructions with M.F.A. who stated that, in League Council, Argentina would endeavour to carry out peaceful policy.	71	99
Mar. 17	<i>The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. who counselled accepting League of Nations' invitation.	140	183

## LATIN AMERICA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 18	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Chile</i> Refers to document No. 140 and states that, while attitude of Chilean Government welcome in so far as directed towards settlement, proposal that matter be referred to Hague Court is mistaken. Instructions to draw attention to German arguments against this course.	150	196
Mar. 19	<i>The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 150 and reports has carried out instructions with M.F.A. who explained object of Chilean proposal as being to gain time.	158	204
Mar. 19	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Ecuador to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. who confirmed that Ecuador representative had been instructed to absent himself from League Council meeting.	159	205
Mar. 22	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Ecuador to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 176 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports conversations with M.F.A. and Head of State, who informed him that Ecuador would continue to refrain from adopting any attitude in League Council deliberations in London and that her representative instructed to absent himself from London.	181	243
Mar. 24	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Argentina to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 176 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has carried out his instructions with M.F.A., who explained reasons for attitude adopted by Argentina representative on League Council. M.F.A. expressed desire to receive confidential suggestions and more precise information of German intentions. Recommends complying with this request and asks for instructions.	203	278
Aug. 6	<i>The Ambassador in Brazil to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on German-Brazilian trade relations.	500	882
Oct. 3	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Records conversation with Argentinian Ambassador about negotiations of Argentinian Government Mission for purchase of equipment and about Argentinian request for despatch of German air officer to Argentina as instructor.	569	1029
Oct. 14	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department</i> Records conversation with new German Naval Attaché for Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, who stated he had been instructed particularly to interest himself in orders for armaments of all kinds from Germany.	598	1081
Oct. 21	<i>The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits copy of communication from High Command of Navy to Commercial Attaché at German Legation in Mexico concerning acquisition of petroleum concession there.	619	1130

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LV

## LUXEMBURG

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Mar. 31	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Luxemburg</i> States question not acute of whether Luxemburg should be included amongst States with which Germany prepared to conclude non-aggression pacts, and instructs on language to be held if matter raised.	241	354

## MILITARY POLICY

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Aug. 24	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature by Hitler on August 24 of decree extending period of compulsory military service in Germany, and announcement of German Government's decision to place embargo on export of war material to Spain.		926
Aug. 25	<i>Circular of the Acting State Secretary</i> States that extension of period of compulsory military service was result of Russian measures to increase active strength of Red Army, but nothing extraordinary need be seen in German measure, nor are there far-reaching political aims behind it. Compares two-year period of service now obtaining in Germany with periods obtaining in Germany and elsewhere before World War, and with periods currently obtaining in other countries, gives further details concerning German measure, and instructs that foregoing information be used in conversations.	517	927

## NAVAL NEGOTIATIONS

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936 Mar. 6	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Refers to document No. 601 in vol. iv of this Series and states that, even in event of tripartite naval treaty only, Germany still prepared to negotiate special naval agreement with Britain provided latter concludes similar agreement with USSR.	6	22
Mar. 7	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records message from Naval Attaché in London, requesting decision on two questions raised in Anglo-German naval negotiations, and instructions sent in reply.	10	28
Mar. 9	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie of Foreign Office on subject of German replies to British proposals for conclusion of special Anglo-German naval agreement.	46	73
Mar. 17	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie in Foreign Office concerning draft of naval treaty and proposed bilateral Anglo-German agreement. Craigie expressed hope that German reservation about not bringing Anglo-German agreement into force until conclusion of similar Anglo-Russian agreement would be withdrawn.	144	188



Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 25	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature of Treaty for Limitation of Naval Armament by Britain, France and United States.		304
Mar. 27	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records telephone message from Naval High Command, War Ministry, that it is intended to state, in connexion with <i>procès-verbal</i> on humanizing of submarine warfare, that Germany prepared to accede to Part IV of London Naval Treaty of 1930.	229	331
May 4	<i>Note to the British Government</i> States views on British proposal that Britain and Germany conclude a bilateral agreement on the basis of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936.	309	506
May 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses report by Naval Attaché of conversation with Craigie in Foreign Office, who gave him memorandum (attached) on course of, and conclusions reached in, Anglo-German naval conversations since Feb. 26, 1936, and whom he informed of his instructions to communicate German Government's official views on British proposal to conclude bilateral naval agreement. Craigie expressed extreme concern at German A-class cruiser construction programme.	323	538
May 15	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports confidential information concerning Soviet reply to British proposal of bilateral naval agreement.	331	554
May 19	<i>The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry</i> Requests immediate despatch of telegram to Naval Attaché, London, instructing him to communicate German Government's views to Craigie at Foreign Office.	336	564
May 19	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 309 and 336 and reports has carried out instructions with Craigie at Foreign Office.	337	564
May 29	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Foreign Secretary Eden about German intention to construct two A-class cruisers, and transmits British memorandum on subject.	355	589
June 9	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Sends observation on document No. 355, enclosure: German intentions as to building of A and B-class cruisers.	361	602
June 11	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports communication of Note (based on document No. 361) regarding German construction plans.	366	617
June 24	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie with whom acted on Ribbentrop's instructions concerning B-class cruisers; information supplied by Craigie on Anglo-Russian naval negotiations and question of A-class cruisers.	402	682

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LVII

## NAVAL NEGOTIATIONS—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
July 1	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 402 and reports conversation with Craigie about Anglo-Russian naval conversations and question of possible right of passage for Russian Black Sea fleet through Straits.	421	719
July 6	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie who drew attention to most recent conversation between German Foreign Minister and British Ambassador in Berlin (document No. 417; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) when latter raised subject of German press allegations that, in view of British concessions to Russia at Montreux Conference, Germany would need to demand alteration in ratios laid down in German-British Naval Agreement. Craigie instructed by Eden to state that British Government deplored German attitude and that German assertions regarding agreements reached at Montreux totally in contradiction to facts.	431	732
July 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by Parliamentary Private Secretary to First Lord of Admiralty that British opposition at Montreux Conference to Russo-French attempts to obtain right of passage for Russia's Black Sea Fleet, in fulfilment of obligations under Franco-Russian Pact, partly motivated by German anxieties over Franco-Russian Pact.	445	753
July 13	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Refers to document No. 431, informs of statements made on his Government's instructions by British Chargé d'Affaires on subject of negotiations at Montreux and German-British Naval Agreement, and sends instructions to inform Craigie that, in view of explanations received, matter now regarded as settled.	448	763
July 16	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie in Foreign Office, who gave information concerning current state of Montreux Conference.	453	770
July 16	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 448 and 453 and reports has held language with Craigie concerning Montreux Conference in accordance with document No. 448.	456	773
July 17	<i>The Naval Conference Group (SK) to the Office of the Commander in Chief of the Navy (M)</i> Communication, with instructions for forwarding to Naval Attaché in London, commenting on new militaro-political situation arising from Anglo-Russian naval negotiations and fortification of Dardanelles.	459	782
July 22	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports communication by Craigie of (enclosed) Memorandum in reply to document No. 309.	470	802
July 30	<i>The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on meeting at Foreign Office where Craigie stated Anglo-Russian naval negotiations concluded and protocol signed and communicated (enclosed) text of protocol, and subsequent discussion.	486	843

NAVAL NEGOTIATIONS—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Aug. 4	<i>Admiral Densch to Captain (Navy) Wassner</i> Letter stating Commander in Chief requests that Wassner endeavour to ensure that no British representative, (i.e., Craigie) comes to Berlin for personal consultations.	496	874
Sept. 7	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Craigie in Foreign Office regarding effect of refortification of Dardanelles on German strategical position at sea.	529	953
Sept. 30	<i>Minute by an Official of the Foreign Ministry</i> Informs Commander in Chief of Navy that Ribbentrop considers that German reply to document No. 486, enclosure, should be communicated in London rather than to a British representative in Berlin, and invites Raeder's views.	563	1016
Oct. 1	<i>The Acting State Secretary to the Legations in Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden</i> Instructs on language to be held, in connexion with recent naval negotiations between Great Britain and Northern States, concerning Anglo-Russian naval negotiations.	564	1017
Oct. 5	<i>Note to the British Government</i> Refers to summary of results of Anglo-Soviet naval discussions of July 29, 1936 (document No. 486, enclosure), and British Memorandum of July 22, 1936 (document No. 470, enclosures), states views upon influence of Anglo-Soviet Naval Agreement on Germany's naval situation, and upon British Memorandum of July 22, and suggests points for inclusion in final protocol proposed in British Memorandum.	571	1032
Oct. 28	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 529, reports conversation in Foreign Office between Craigie and Prince Bismarck about outcome of Montreux Conference, and transmits copy of <i>Aide-mémoire</i> communicated by Craigie.	633	1152
Oct. 31	<i>The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Forwards memorandum on conversation in Foreign Office about naval negotiations on basis of German Note of October 5 (document No. 571).  [See also under <i>Great Britain</i> .]	638	1161

## NETHERLANDS

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 7	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 4 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports that, in absence of M.F.A., has carried out instructions with Secretary General.	16	34
Mar. 12	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Netherlands Government have not yet decided on attitude towards German proposal that Netherlands accede to non-aggression pact.	83	114

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LIX

## NETHERLANDS—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 16	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports M.F.A. expects to be able to communicate shortly Netherlands reply to German offer of participation in non-aggression pact and forecasts probable nature of reply. Also reports statements by M.F.A. concerning Netherlands attitude to possible imposition of sanctions.	128	168
Mar. 23	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 176 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has carried out instructions with M.F.A. who showed understanding for German view and intends informing Netherlands representative in London of Netherlands view that question should not, at present juncture, be submitted to League Council, but should be solved by Locarno Signatories.	190	256
Mar. 23	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 128 and reports reply, given orally by M.F.A., to Germany's offer to Netherlands to conclude non-aggression pact.	193	260
July 16	<i>Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the Political Department</i> Records conversation with Netherlands Minister, who enquired as to situation regarding Anglo-Franco-Belgian conversations. Questioned as to Dutch views on German offer of inclusion in a new treaty, Minister stated Netherlands not in favour of participating in such treaty.	454	771
Sept. 15	<i>Ambassador Papen to Reich Chancellor Hitler</i> Letter conveying request of League Commissioner for Austria, Rost van Tonningen, that Hitler grant audience to leader of Dutch National Socialist Party, Mussert, in second half of October.	539	971
Oct. 1	<i>Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Press Department</i> Reports conversation with former League Commissioner for Austria, Rost van Tonningen, who requested assistance in his plans for taking over editorship of periodical of NSB movement in Netherlands.	565	1020
Oct. 19	<i>The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments on engagement of Princess Juliana of Netherlands to Prince Bernhard zur Lippe-Biesterfeld in connexion with Dutch-German relations.	616	1118

## POLAND AND DANZIG

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 4 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has carried out instructions with M.F.A. Beck feared that contrast between proposed twenty-five-year duration for new non-aggression pact and ten-year duration of existing Polish-German Agreement might disturb public opinion in Poland.	19	39
Mar. 7	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador who complained that negotiations between President of Reichsbank Schacht and senior Polish official on settlement of German debts for Corridor rail transit traffic had been abruptly broken off. Ambassador said German action would be regarded in Warsaw as unfriendly.	22	43



## POLAND AND DANZIG—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. to whom again set forth German views in detail; latter continued to maintain reserve and clearly concerned not to commit himself; Beck's comment on alleged Polish assurance to France concerning fulfilment of obligations under Franco-Polish Alliance.	61	88
Mar. 10	<i>A Deputy Director of Department II to the Embassy in Poland</i> Explains reasons why negotiations on payment of German debts arising from rail transit traffic through Corridor have been temporarily broken off.	62	90
Mar. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has requested Editor of <i>Berliner Tageblatt</i> not to print telegram from paper's Warsaw correspondent referring to Reuter report of declaration made by Polish M.F.A. to French Ambassador that Poland would honour alliance obligations, which contradicts semi-official Polish statement that Poland had no direct interest in present situation, which primarily matter for Western Powers.	67	95
Mar. 12	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. concerning forthcoming meeting of League Council in London, and on difficult situation in which Polish Government placed by failure to reach settlement over German debts for Corridor rail transit traffic.	82	112
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports details supplied by well-informed source of action taken by French Ambassador to controvert Polish M.F.A.'s press communiqué that Poland not directly interested in matter of German action in Rhineland.	106	144
Mar. 13	<i>Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger</i> Letter referring to document No. 82, and explaining his reasons for broaching question of Corridor rail transit traffic payments with Polish M.F.A.	107	146
Mar. 18	<i>Senior Counsellor Roediger to Ambassador Moltke</i> Letter describing most recent position reached in Corridor rail transit traffic payments question. Following conversation with Schacht, Göring has brought matter to Hitler's attention but latter has not yet been able to see Schacht. Polish Ambassador in Berlin to intervene with Polish Government to prevent further restrictive measures.	151	197
Mar. 20	<i>Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger</i> Letter commenting upon Polish M.F.A.'s tactics in London, from which concludes that Beck endeavouring to get German-Polish Non-Aggression Declaration extended to 25 years. Recommends endeavouring in return to obtain from Poland some improvement in conditions of German minority.	173	228
Apr. 1	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador who, on instructions, explained that activities of Polish M.F.A. in London had been directed to preventing League Council verdict from being couched in form offensive to Germany, and Locarno Powers from putting pressure on Council.	245	366

## POLAND AND DANZIG—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Apr. 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Reich Chancellery</i> Records that, on Göring's initiative, German-Polish conversations on Corridor rail transit traffic problem have taken place, as a result of which German delegation, led by official of Reich Ministry of Transport, has left for Warsaw.	261	394
Apr. 7	<i>Ambassador Moltke to Minister President Göring</i> Encloses text of preliminary agreement signed with Poles regarding settlement of question of payments for railway charges incurred by Germany for transit traffic through Corridor.	264	400
Apr. 9	<i>Minister of Economics Schacht to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Protests at signature of preliminary agreements with Poland in respect of Corridor rail transit traffic payments without awaiting his views, and states cannot permit any discussion of unfreezing of Polish capital claims against Germany.	276	429
Apr. 10	<i>Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger</i> Letter noting points from conversation with Polish Ambassador in Berlin; alleged promises by Göring concerning German Peace Plan and Poland; Polish concern at German revisionist activities in Upper Silesia.	278	431
Apr. 24	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Polish M.F.A. on latter's views on various peace plans and on value of collective security.	293	468
May 16	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador who, on instructions, conveyed impressions gained by Beck during recent visit to Geneva. Latter continued to take unfavourable view of any Eastern Pact.	332	555
May 29	<i>An Official of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics to an Official of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Transport</i> Reports conversation with Göring on question of negotiations with Poland on Corridor rail transit traffic payments. Latter considers it no longer as necessary as a few weeks ago to meet Polish desires so extensively.	356	595
June 16	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports League Commissioner in Danzig has complained about activities of Gauleiter Forster, and comments on recent events in Danzig.	373	627
June 20	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador about recent events in Danzig.	394	666
July 1	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain and the Legation in Eire</i> States that, on occasion of visit by German cruiser <i>Leipzig</i> to Danzig, Commander instructed to omit customary courtesy call on League High Commissioner, explains reasons, and transmits DNB report on incident and on recent article by Gauleiter Forster.	419	716

## POLAND AND DANZIG—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 July 4	<i>Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the Political Department</i> Records conversation with Staatsrat Schimmel of Danzig Senate who had instructions from President of Senate Greiser to inform Foreign Ministry officially of conversations held by Gauleiter Forster with Hitler and Göring and of course of action decided upon in respect of Danzig and League of Nations.	429	729
July 5	<i>The Consul in Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information given him in strict confidence by President of Danzig Senate Greiser about latter's conversation with Polish M.F.A. Beck in Geneva after Greiser's speeches in League Council debate on Danzig.	430	730
July 6	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records conversation with President of Danzig Senate Greiser upon latter's return from League Council meeting in Geneva. Informed Greiser of French and British <i>démarches</i> that morning concerning Danzig. Greiser described Berlin conversations with Hitler and Göring, events at League Council meeting in Geneva and his own conversation there with Polish M.F.A. Beck. Latter had subsequently, on returning from Geneva, had conversation with Göring.	434	739
July 7	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records information from Göring about latter's conversation with Polish M.F.A. Beck concerning Danzig and execution of commission entrusted to him by League Council.	438	745
July 8	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records that, with reference to document No. 438, has enquired of Polish Ambassador how Polish Government propose to execute commission entrusted to them by League Council in connexion with incident over German [naval] visit to Danzig.	443	751
July 17	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports and comments upon Polish reactions to speech by President of Danzig Senate, Greiser, made to League of Nations Council in Geneva.	458	780
July 22	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Extract from letter, stating Hitler has approved reply to projected Polish Note on Danzig and instructing Dieckhoff to show draft reply to Polish Ambassador and to tell him German Government desire removal of present League High Commissioner for Danzig.	467	798
July 23	<i>The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on Danzig protest against demonstrations by Polish Maritime and Colonial League, and forwards memorandum on conversation between President of Danzig Senate and Polish Diplomatic Representative.	472	814
July 24	<i>Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff to Ambassador Molike</i> Letter stating has discussed draft for German Note to Poland on Danzig with Polish Ambassador, who thought his Government would approve, and describes procedure agreed upon. Gives German views on proposed meeting of all five Locarno Powers. States anxiety felt about position of Reich nationals in Spain.	473	820

## POLAND AND DANZIG—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
July 24	<i>Ambassador Moltke to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter referring to document No. 473 and enclosing memorandum on conversation with Polish M.F.A. concerning Danzig question and German desire for removal of League High Commissioner for Danzig.	476	823
Aug. 3	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Poland, the Consulates General in Danzig, Katowice, Poznań and Toruń, and the Consulates in Cracow and Łwow</i> Informs of signature, on July 27, 1936, of Treaty on liquidation of German share of I. G. Kattowitz-Laura, gives terms of and comments on Treaty, and sends text of agreed press communiqué.	491	862
Aug. 12	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Szembek, who stated that forthcoming visit to Poland of Chief of French General Staff, Gamelin, was purely military in character, stressed defensive nature of Franco-Polish military alliance, and commented on individual points in German-Polish relations, and on Poland's relations with Little Entente.	506	894
Aug. 12	<i>Editors' Note</i> No record of conversations on August 12 between Szembek and Hitler and Göring found in files, but account given in Szembek: <i>Journal</i> .		896
Aug. 18	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Szembek, who expressed gratitude for friendly reception accorded him in Berlin, stressed that any alteration of Danzig Statute or even of position of League in Danzig would be matter of importance to Poland, and, when questioned, stated no thought had as yet been given in Poland to settlement on Upper Silesia which would have to be achieved after July 15, 1937.	513	914
Aug. 25	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on motives underlying, and character of, visit of Chief of French General Staff, Gamelin, to Poland, and on what has learned regarding content of talks held during visit.	518	929
Aug. 31	<i>Editors' Note</i> Signature, on August 31, in Berlin, of German-Polish agreements (a) on settlement of arrears in respect of railway transit traffic between East Prussia and rest of Germany, and (b) on railway transit traffic for 1936.		942
Sept. 2	<i>Attaché Seiler of the Consulate General in Danzig to Secretary of Legation Bergmann of Political Division V</i> Letter forwarding memorandum by Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher containing proposals for attitude to be adopted by Danzig at forthcoming session of Council of League of Nations.	524	942
Sept. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on outcome of recent visit of Rydz-Smigley, Inspector General of Polish Army, to Paris, and encloses report by German Military Attaché in Warsaw.	551	991
Sept. 25	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with Polish Ambassador concerning Polish attitude to Danzig and League of Nations.	557	1007



POLAND AND DANZIG—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Oct. 2	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records Polish Ambassador stated, on instructions from Polish M.F.A., that League High Commissioner for Danzig being transferred to another post; Beck hoped for continued German-Polish cooperation in matter of Lester's successor.	566	1020
Oct. 6	<i>The Acting Director of the Political Department to the Consulate General in Danzig</i> Sends instructions, in view of Poland's having been charged by League Council with task of ending situation described in report of League High Commissioner for Danzig, that Consulate General to enquire about Danzig intentions and views about probable Polish attitude.	573	1045
Oct. 7	<i>The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 573 and reports conversation with Staatsrat Böttcher about question of successor to League High Commissioner for Danzig, probable Polish attitude to Danzig, and aims of Danzig in domestic and foreign policy.	575	1048
Oct. 9	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 573 and reports what has ascertained regarding probable Polish attitude to Danzig.	579	1054
Oct. 12	<i>The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Gauleiter of Danzig has gone to Munich, where decisive discussion to take place soon, and that Social Democrat Party in Danzig likely to be banned shortly.	584	1062
Oct. 13	<i>The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned it has been decided at Berchtesgaden that Danzig Social Democrat Party to be banned; an announcement to be expected on October 14.	594	1074
Oct. 15	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Lists points of view in connexion with discussions between Danzig Senate and Polish Government concerning status of Danzig and relation of Danzig to League of Nations.	605	1092
Oct. 16	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has had discussion with Gauleiter of Danzig about Danzig affairs; has asked Gauleiter to conduct any conversations with Poles in liaison with Foreign Ministry, which he promised to do.	609	1102
Oct. 23	<i>The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Polish M.F.A. about German-Polish relations and Danzig question.	623	1134
Oct. 26	<i>Memorandum by the Acting Director of the Political Department</i> Records President of Danzig Senate reported to Foreign Minister and State Secretary on <i>démarche</i> in Danzig by Polish Representative, who left (attached) memorandum; Foreign Minister told Greiser that Danzig-Polish arrangements must not be considered in isolation from German-Polish relations or political situation in general.	628	1143
Oct. 28	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Consulate General in Danzig</i> Transmits, for information, copies of documents Nos. 623 and 628 and instructs on language to be held with Foreign Department of Senate regarding performance of task assigned to Poland by League Council in Danzig question.	630	1149

## POLAND AND DANZIG—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Oct. 29	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records has obtained Hitler's agreement to following directives regarding Danzig: (1) election of new League Commissioner for Danzig best solution at present; (2) any extension of rights of Poles in Danzig to be prevented; (3) Danzig Gauleiter's plan for plebiscite about League Commissioner for Danzig not for consideration; (4) Danzig National Socialist Party's anti-Polish propaganda to cease.	635	1159
Oct. 29	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records Polish Ambassador evinced concern about anti-Polish propaganda in Danzig, stated Polish policy towards Germany would not change, and suggested direct German-Polish conversations about Danzig.	636	1159
Oct. 31	<i>The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 630, reports what has learned concerning Danzig Senate's intentions, comments on enclosure to document No. 628, and forwards copy of memorandum by Senate on situation Danzig-League of Nations-Poland.  [See also under <i>Rhineland</i> .]	639	1169

## RHINELAND

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 5	<i>Editors' Note</i> Relevant Articles of the Treaty of Versailles, the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Treaty of Locarno.		1
Mar. 5	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium</i> Instructions that at noon on March 7 Hitler will publicly proclaim to Reichstag restoration of German sovereignty in demilitarized Rhineland zone and that enclosed memorandum should be conveyed personally to M.F.A., or deputy, of Government to which accredited on morning of March 7.	3	11
Mar. 5	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands</i> Encloses copy of document No. 3 and instructs to take similar action.	4	19
Mar. 6	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Informs of action being taken in respect of demilitarized Rhineland zone and instructs as to language to be held on subject.	7	22
Mar. 6	<i>Minutes of the Conference of Ministers held on Friday, March 6, 1936, at 9.15 p.m.</i> Statement by Hitler concerning decision to reoccupy demilitarized Rhineland zone.	9	26
Mar. 7	<i>Editors' Note</i> Speech by Hitler to the Reichstag at noon on March 7, announcing the reoccupation of the demilitarized Rhineland zone.		31

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 7	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Minister and Reich Minister of Propaganda</i> Informs of briefing being given to Attachés in case of enquiries concerning military and air strengths of German forces reoccupying demilitarized Rhineland zone.	23	44
Mar. 8	<i>Editors' Note</i> Action taken by French and Belgian Governments in seizing League of Nations of German action, and enquiry addressed by League Secretary General to German Government concerning German representation at forthcoming Council meeting. Speech broadcast by French Minister President.		45
Mar. 8	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Refers to summoning of Council of the League of Nations and instructs that German point of view should be impressed on Governments concerned to prevent precipitate resolutions again delaying a German return to Geneva.	25	47
Mar. 10	<i>Editors' Note</i> Paris meeting of Locarno Powers, other than Germany, on March 10.		77
Mar. 10	<i>The Acting Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 51 (see under <i>Italy</i> ) and reports views expressed by Hungarian representative on probable outcome of League Council meeting. Also reports views of Polish delegate that Poland would maintain attitude of reserve.	60	87
Mar. 10	<i>The Reich Air Ministry to the Foreign Ministry</i> States that, on official instructions, no information to be given foreign Air Attachés regarding Luftwaffe units transferred to Rhineland.	65	92
Mar. 11	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Great Britain, France, Italy and Belgium, and to the Consulate at Geneva</i> Refers to Havas report that, at Paris meeting of remaining Locarno Powers on March 10, French and Belgians demanded insistence on German undertaking not to fortify former demilitarized zone and instructs to warn that such demands not acceptable to Germany.	76	105
Mar. 11	<i>The Acting Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports is reliably informed that, at conference of States of Little Entente and Balkan Entente, under chairmanship of Titulescu, decision taken to insist within League Council on strict application of treaties.	78	106
Mar. 12	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting in London of the Locarno Powers, other than Germany, on March 12.		113
Mar. 13	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain</i> Draws attention to certain important formal points in connexion with German reoccupation of demilitarized Rhineland zone and possible procedures by Locarno Powers and League Council. Sets forth legal basis for assumption that neither Locarno Powers nor League would be justified under existing Treaties and League Covenant in taking action against Germany.	101	136

RHINELAND—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 13	<i>Minute by the State Secretary</i> Refers to decision by Hitler forbidding publication of strength of German forces in Rhineland, and suggests calming effect would be produced if German statement could be issued giving figures.	104	142
Mar. 14	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting of League Council in London on March 14.		157
[Mar. 14]	<i>Unsigned Minute</i> Sets out alternatives open to German policy in respect of invitation from League Council to attend meeting.	119	157
Mar. 15	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports views of Spanish, Chilean and Polish representatives to League Council that Germany would be well advised to attend. Recommends adopting this course.	121	159
Mar. 15	<i>The Foreign Minister to the Secretary General of the League of Nations</i> Conveys German reply to League Council's invitation to attend.	123	162
Mar. 15	<i>The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on conversations with Danish and Polish M.F.A.'s. Munch urged that Germany accept Council's invitation and stated he was averse to sanctions or vote of censure. Beck likewise advised acceptance but was otherwise somewhat reticent.	126	165
Mar. 16	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meetings of the Council of the League of Nations in London on March 16, 17 and 18.		178
Mar. 17	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Records telephone conversation with Bismarck in London Embassy, who had been informed by a diplomat present at secret session of League Council of position there over question of German reply to Council's invitation to attend.	134	179
Mar. 19	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department</i> Records telephone conversations with Dieckhoff in London concerning course to be adopted by German representative in League Council meeting. Instructions that protest should be entered against Council resolution finding Germany at fault.	154	200
Mar. 19	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meetings of Council of League of Nations in London on March 19: speech by Ribbentrop on German case and voting upon draft resolution finding Germany in breach of treaty.		203
Mar. 19	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Records telephone message from Ambassador in London about proceedings in League Council that morning. Draft resolution to be voted upon that afternoon but what will subsequently happen still quite unclear.	157	203
Mar. 19	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy and to the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe</i> Orders that vigorous measures be taken to avoid frontier incidents.	160	205



## RHINELAND—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 19	<i>Editors' Note</i> Text of proposals drawn up by the representatives of the Locarno Powers, other than Germany, at their meeting in London on March 19.		208
Mar. 20	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Records Hitler's decision on course to be followed by German delegation in League Council meeting that day.	163	215
Mar. 20	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat</i> Records information from Dieckhoff in London about proceedings in private meeting of League Council that afternoon, when no decision reached on whether Council should discuss proposals drawn up by remaining Locarno Powers.	168	220
Mar. 21	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Criticizes various points in proposals made by remaining Locarno Powers in London negotiations, and instructs that use should be made of the German counter arguments at every opportunity.	176	231
Mar. 22	<i>The Acting Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that representatives of Denmark, Spain, Norway, Finland, Netherlands and Switzerland have met to discuss attitude to be adopted in League Council discussions of proposals of remaining Locarno Powers, and on believed outcome of this meeting.	179	241
Mar. 22	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Foreign Ministry draft for reply to London proposals of remaining Locarno Powers.	182	244
Mar. 22	<i>The Foreign Ministry to Brigadeführer Schaub (Reich Chancellery) and to Ambassador Ribbentrop</i> Transmits and comments upon draft for reply to proposals of remaining Locarno Powers.	183	246
Mar. 23	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses data on armed forces stationed on German and French sides of former demilitarized Rhineland zone, together with some military points for a German reply.	189	254
Mar. 23	<i>State Secretary Bülow to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter requesting fuller reports from Delegation in London; discussing arrangements for transmission of information and for better briefing of press.	192	257
Mar. 24	<i>Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff to State Secretary Bülow</i> Letter in reply to document No. 192, and describing his own activities in London.	199	274
Mar. 24	<i>Circular of the Foreign Minister</i> Informs of Hitler's decision to communicate to British Government an interim general statement of views on proposals of remaining Locarno Powers, and to reserve concrete proposals till March 31. Instructs that in any conversations it should be stressed that there is no immediate necessity to come to urgent decisions.	200	275

## RHINELAND—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 30	<i>Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Records conversation with President of League of Nations Council before Council's meeting on Tuesday, March 24; discussed with him status of German delegate should Council not adjourn but embark upon discussion of proposals of remaining Locarno Powers.	201	276
Mar. 24	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting of Council of League of Nations in London on March 24 and resolution then adopted.		277
[Mar. 24]	<i>Note to the British Government</i> Statement of German views on proposals drawn up by representatives of Locarno Powers, other than Germany, in London on March 19.	207	283
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department II</i> Reviews attitude so far adopted by Powers to question of participating in possible sanctions against Germany.	214	297
Mar. 26	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy and to the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe</i> Gives text of statement by Hitler, conveyed to British Government by German Ambassador, concerning strength of troops stationed in Rhineland and intentions as to their disposition, and adds instructions on measures to be taken in Rhineland.	222	314
Mar. 27	<i>Memorandum by an Official of the German Delegation in London</i> Comments, in the light of official British statements, upon provisions in Locarno Powers' proposals of March 19 for General Staff talks, for measures for interim period before general agreement on Rhineland reached, for a communication from Guarantor Powers to France and Belgium, and proposals for final settlement.	227	322
[Mar. 18-27]	<i>Memorandum by a Member of the German Delegation to London</i> Gives account, in diary form, of activities of German Delegation in London, March 18-27.	228	325
Mar. 27	<i>Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht Blomberg to Foreign Minister Neurath</i> Letter transmitting suggestions for points to be made in second part of Note to British Government on Rhineland question.	230	331
Mar. 28	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht Blomberg</i> Letter replying to and commenting on document No. 230.	233	339
Mar. 31	<i>The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy, the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe, and the Wehrmachtsamt</i> Refers to document No. 160 and orders that no soldiers or Wehrmacht officials in uniform to enter 5-kilometre zone along French, Belgian and Czech frontiers, except where German-French frontier formed by Rhine; here prohibition applies to Rhine bridges.	240	353

## RHINELAND—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 31	<i>Note to the British Government</i> Peace Plan of the German Government of March 31, 1936, handed to the British Government by Ambassador von Ribbentrop on April 1, 1936.	242	355
Apr. 10	<i>Editors' Note</i> Conversations held at Geneva by the Locarno Powers other than Germany.		432
Apr. 11	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports what information has been able to gather on previous day's conversations of Locarno Powers in Geneva.	279	433
Apr. 17	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Reich War Ministry</i> Refers to publication, in Geneva, on April 10, of communiqué on negotiations held between remaining Locarno Powers; believes that in addition to two memoranda published by French on April 8, they sent British delegation a third, secret, document containing real wishes, and comments on probable contents of this. Also comments on communiqué of April 10, and stresses importance to Germany of passage concerning possible changes in Rhineland during time of negotiations.	285	448
Apr. 18	<i>The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry</i> Encloses communication from Secretary General of League of Nations stating question of Locarno Treaty on agenda for Council Session on May 11 and enquiring if German Government wish to be represented.	286	449
May 12	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting between representatives of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom at Geneva on May 12.  [See also under <i>General Policy, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy.</i> ]		536

## RUMANIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 25 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports that M.F.A., Titulescu, congratulates Führer on speech, but regrets premature sending of German troops into Rhineland and failure to submit to arbitration question of reconciliation of Franco-Soviet Pact with Locarno Treaty.	39	63
Mar. 10	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that, according to reliable information, Crown Council has decided to keep three divisions near Hungarian frontier in state of alert.	53	82
Mar. 11	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Rumanian Minister who desired information on various points in German Memorandum (document No. 3, enclosure; see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	69	98

## RUMANIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 13	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports rumours that despatch of Russian aircraft to Czechoslovakia and similar mobilization measures designed to provoke Germany into affording pretext for military sanctions.	93	129
Mar. 14	<i>The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 93 and states there is no serious talk of military sanctions or preparations for war; despatch of small detachments of Wehrmacht to Rhineland merely symbolic.	111	150
Mar. 16	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Analyses Rumanian foreign policy in the "Locarno crisis"; considers that, in foreign policy, Rumania has drawn closer to Russia, whilst Titulescu's position has been strengthened in his relations with King Carol.	131	172
Mar. 17	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Reports conversation with Rumanian Minister who denied press reports of Titulescu having adopted unfriendly attitude to Germany during London negotiations.	142	184
Apr. 29	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. concerning objectives of Rumanian foreign policy, anxieties felt by Little Entente concerning possible Austro-German <i>Anschluss</i> , and Rumanian displeasure at independent policy pursued by Turkey in making <i>démarche</i> on question of fortifying Straits without prior consultations.	300	483
June 18	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Rumania</i> Refers to document No. 374 (see under <i>Czechoslovakia</i> ) and instructs Legation to enquire whether Czechoslovak M.F.A.'s statement about plans for Rumano-Russian pact correct and to draw attention to grave situation to which such plans would give rise.	380	636
June 19	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 374 (see under <i>Czechoslovakia</i> ) and 380 and reports information from Rumanian M.F.A. on attitude of Little Entente to Austrian question, question of changes in League General Assembly, Russia, and possibility of separating League Covenant from Treaty of Versailles; general Rumanian policy, question of possible Rumano-Russian pact, and Little Entente Staff negotiations also discussed.	385	647
June 20	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports, in addition to account of conversation with Rumanian M.F.A. contained in document No. 385, that Titulescu admitted having spoken to Russians about concluding a pact, but denied wanting one on model of Czechoslovak-Russian Treaty.	396	668
June 23	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with King Carol who contradicted statement by Czechoslovak M.F.A. that Rumania about to conclude treaty with Russia and enquired as to significance of Schacht's recent tour of South-East Europe.	397	670



## RUMANIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 June 24	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that, during conversation with King Carol reported in document No. 397, King enquired whether he believed Russia desired war, and own reply.	399	674
July 7	<i>Unsigned Memorandum</i> Reports that press allegations of Rumanian Right-wing parties receiving financial support from Germany have now been made to him directly by King Carol, who stated funds coming not officially but from Party. Gives details of two Rumanians, Nae Ionescu and Radu Lecca, through whom funds believed supplied. Draws attention to prejudicial effect on German-Rumanian relations of accusation of German interference in Rumanian internal affairs.	440	746
Aug. 4	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV</i> Comments, in connexion with forthcoming visit by Rumanian politician Octavian Goga to Neurath, on assertions in Rumania that Rumanian Right-wing parties in receipt of financial support from NSDAP.	492	865
Aug. 6	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Rumanian Minister, who raised question of Rumanian desire that European Danube Commission be dissolved. Replied this desire compatible with German wishes concerning revision of Peace Treaties, but refused to take initiative in matter.	497	874
Aug. 6	<i>Minute by an Official of Political Division IV</i> Records has been informed by official of Reich Ministry of Economics that latter had not been able to ascertain whether Rumanian Right-wing parties in receipt of German financial support.	498	875
Sept. 6	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with new Rumanian M.F.A., Antonescu, about conditions in Germany, Rumanian foreign policy and dismissal of Titulescu, and Rumanian domestic policy, and gives own conclusions.	528	949
Sept. 24	<i>Editors' Note</i> Meeting of German-Rumanian Governmental Committees ends with signature on September 24 of three economic agreements.		1003
Oct. 7	<i>The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with King Carol of Rumania concerning international and domestic questions.	576	1049

## SPAIN

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 9	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to documents Nos. 7 and 25 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ) and reports has strongly emphasized German view to M.F.A. Latter's views reserved on legal position but showed understanding for German struggle to restore sovereignty over German territory.	40	64

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

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## SPAIN—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 16	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Völckers to Ambassador Welczeck</i> Letter discussing difficulties that have arisen between Director General of Export Consortium for War Material, Eltze, and Spanish intermediary in connexion with supplies of German war material to Spain.	133	176
Mar. 25	<i>Minute by an Official of the Economic Department</i> Records has given State Secretary (retd.) Trendelenburg extract from document No. 133 and discussed Laiglesia negotiations with him.	215	301
Mar. 26	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on internal situation in Spain.	221	308
May 4	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Referat Deutschland</i> Records that Himmler and Heydrich wish to send official to Spain to observe development of Communism there and request that this person be attached to Madrid Embassy but remain as inconspicuous as possible.	307	504
June 27	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on internal situation in Spain, which has deteriorated still further.	406	694
July 6	<i>Secretary of Legation Bülow to Counsellor of Embassy Völckers</i> Letter stating that Herr Brinkmann has requested Admiral Canaris to approach Foreign Ministry since Madrid Embassy not sufficiently assisting Brinkmann in matter of certain financial claims being prejudiced by action of Spanish State. Requests views.  [See also vol. III of Series D.]	433	738

## SWEDEN

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 14	<i>The Minister in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from various sources indicating that, though Swedish Government regard situation as serious, it is hoped action against Germany may be avoided.	115	154
Mar. 20	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to press reports that Locarno Powers proposing temporary establishment of neutral frontier zone in Rhineland occupied by Scandinavian troops, and reports has learned from responsible military source that Sweden would have gravest misgivings about accepting this task.	166	219
Mar. 23	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 166 and reports conversation with Secretary General of Swedish Foreign Ministry to whom he set forth German view of proposals of remaining Locarno Powers.	191	256

## SWITZERLAND

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 8	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Federal Councillor Motta on probable repercussions on international situation of German reoccupation of Rhineland.	30	53
Mar. 10	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports semi-official views expressed in Swiss press that Switzerland not obliged to take part in sanctions imposed upon State violating Locarno Pact.	52	81
Mar. 13	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports Swiss newspapers asking questions concerning German military constructions on Swiss-German frontier and urging that construction of Swiss frontier defences be hastened.	99	134
Mar. 14	<i>An Official of Department II to the Legation in Switzerland</i> Refers to document No. 99 and sends comment by Reich War Ministry on Swiss press reports regarding German military installations on frontier.	116	154
Mar. 25	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Federal Councillor Motta, who took calm view of general situation.	210	289
Apr. 29	<i>The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Minister of Defence on Swiss rearmament and determination to defend her neutrality against all comers.	301	486
July 1	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Switzerland</i> Refers to the banning of national and regional organizations of NSDAP in Switzerland and sends instructions to inform Federal Councillor Motta of reasons why no German Note has been sent in reply to Swiss Note of February 28, 1936.	420	718
Oct. 26	<i>Minister Weizsäcker to Counsellor of Legation Bibra</i> Letter describing line to be taken by Ministry of Propaganda and Foreign Ministry in connexion with trial of Frankfurter for assassination of Landesgruppenleiter Gustloff.	627	1142

## TURKEY

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 7	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Turkish Secretary General, who called to obtain more detailed information on Hitler's speech, and to whom spoke in accordance with instructions in document No. 7 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ).	20	40
Mar. 11	<i>The Embassy in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with M.F.A. during which again went over all grounds for German action. Requests instructions on reply to be given to question raised by Aras as to what had been German attitude to Laval-Mussolini Rome accord on mutual military support and compatibility of this with Locarno Treaty.	68	96

## TURKEY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 13	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has enquired of Turkish Secretary General concerning rumours of alleged resolution at Geneva by Little Entente and Balkan Entente to promote implementation of Locarno Pact and League Covenant. Numan denied resolution and stated Turkish official <i>démenti</i> being issued.	100	135
Apr. 10	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has been informed by M.F.A. that Turkey is communicating Note to Powers Signatory of Lausanne Convention calling for revision of Article 18 concerning Straits, owing to changed international situation.	277	430
Apr. 20	<i>The Embassy in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Transmits report by German economic delegation negotiating additional commercial agreement of Turkish proposals for linking Turkish economy much more closely to German, provided Germany pays in free foreign exchange for certain proportion of Turkish goods. Numan wishes to discuss project with Schacht in Berlin.	287	451
May 15	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Secretary General of Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs, when enquired of Numan purpose of recent journey to Balkan capitals and Moscow, and discussed with him Russian views of reoccupation of Rhineland, German views of British questionnaire (document No. 313, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ) and Turkish attitude to League.	328	551
June 22	<i>Editors' Note</i> Montreux Conference, held June 22 to July 20, 1936, to discuss Turkish proposals for revision of Straits Convention of July 24, 1923, resulted in signature on July 20, 1936, of new Convention.		669
June 24	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon prospects for Montreux Conference; from reports so far available detects fundamental conflict of interests between Britain and Soviet Russia on question of right of passage of warships through Straits.	400	675
July 7	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Gives details of secret agreements said to exist between Turkey and Soviet Russia in respect of safeguarding Dardanelles.	439	745
July 21	<i>The Acting State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey</i> Instructs, for use at own discretion, on German views regarding new Straits Convention: Satisfaction that Turkey once again able to exercise sovereignty over Straits, view that German position has deteriorated (since Russian Black Sea fleet now free to leave, Turkey being able to take over defence of Black Sea), and view that no need for Germany to recognize Convention.	464	795
July 22	<i>Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Extract from letter, stating Hitler's decision that no formal protest to be made, for time being, against new Straits Convention, but that is personally in favour of getting Turks to notify Germany of Convention and requests Dieckhoff's views.	468	799



## TURKEY—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
July 26	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 464 and reports on what has learned concerning Turkish views on new Straits Convention.	481	831
July 28	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports, in connexion with new Straits Convention, on position of Turkey in international affairs, Turco-Soviet relations, Turco-British relations, Italian attitude, possibility of Turkish-French pact, and relation of Balkan Pact to Little Entente.	483	834
Aug. 4	<i>The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports information from Hungarian Minister that Turkish M.F.A. had denied that Turkey intended to conclude with another State a pact directed against Hungary; but if initiative for new pact negotiations taken by Great Power, Turkey would have to give suggestion favourable consideration.	493	866

## UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 13	<i>The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that Prime Minister, in reply to question, said British Government had been informed that could rely on South Africa's support in efforts to maintain peace and reorganize Europe.	95	130
Mar. 14	<i>Memorandum by the State Secretary</i> Records conversation with South African Minister who suggested that Hitler end period of tension by making statement placing constructive peace programme in forefront.	118	156
Mar. 16	<i>The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 95 and reports has learned privately from Secretary of State Bodenstein of telegram to London drafted personally by Prime Minister Hertzog supporting Germany and expressly condemning French attitude.	127	167
Mar. 21	<i>The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports reaction of Government and public opinion to proposals of remaining Locarno Powers; views of Secretary of State in South African Ministry for External Affairs on desirability of some German voluntary gesture for peace.	175	230
Mar. 25	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department III</i> Records Commercial Attaché of South African Legation referred to attempts by his Government to exert moderating influence on British Government, and enquired about contents of German reply to Locarno Powers' proposals of March 19.	213	295

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LXXVII

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA—*continued*

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Apr. 6	<i>The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Secretary of State Bodenstein concerning attitude of Union Government to German occupation of Rhineland and action taken with British Government.	262	395
May 17	<i>Minister Wiehl to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter stating that South African Defence Minister Pirow about to leave for visit to London, and forecasting probable topics for discussion there; also draws attention to possibility that Pirow may visit Germany and offers suggestions should he do so.	333	556
June 12	<i>Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department</i> Records conversations with South African Minister who, on behalf of Pirow, South African Minister of Defence, Railways and Ports (at present in London), urged that Anglo-German conversations take place as soon as possible.	367	617
June 19	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in the Union of South Africa</i> States that German reply to suggestion for joint visit by Pirow and Halifax to Berlin was that question would be considered, but nothing had been heard from British on subject; instructs Minister to continue to exercise greatest reserve.	384	646
Oct. 9	<i>The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with South African Secretary of State for External Affairs, who gave his views on probable attitude of Union of South Africa in event of European war.	580	1055

## UNITED STATES

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 9	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports view expressed by U.S. Secretary of State in press conference concerning German action in Rhineland and on reactions of Congress and press.	42	66
Mar. 15	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports that State Department now viewing situation with less anxiety; tone of press also calmer but continues very critical of Germany.	125	164
July 22	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the United States</i> Informs Embassy of measures which Germany has taken in view of American Treasury's decision to impose countervailing duties on certain imports from Germany and instructs on language to be held in event of matter being raised.	469	800
Aug. 8	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Submits memorandum concerning current situation in German-American trade and other matters for use on occasion of visit of U.S. Ambassador, who has just returned from home leave.	503	887

## UNITED STATES—continued

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Aug. 18	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on Roosevelt's foreign policy speech at Chautauqua on August 14.	514	915
Aug. 31	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Refers to document No. 517 (see under <i>Military Policy</i> ), and reports has informed U.S. Secretary of State of introduction of two-year period of conscription in Germany, and subsequent conversation.	522	935
Sept. 4	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on content and significance of speech which U.S. Secretary of State is to deliver on September 7 at World Power Conference.	525	944
Sept. 17	<i>Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary</i> Records conversation with American Ambassador, who enquired whether any grounds existed for anxiety about war felt by Americans in Europe, asked whether Germany still prepared to collaborate in general limitation of armaments, and stated in confidence that Roosevelt might approach Powers towards end of year with suggestion for general disarmament conference.	544	979
Oct. 2	<i>Ambassador Luther to Ministerialdirektor Ritter</i> Letter enclosing copy of letter to Schacht describing state of German-United States economic relations.	567	1021
Oct. 16	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records U.S. Ambassador asked what would be German attitude to possible Roosevelt peace plan and whether Germany had communicated reply to British Memorandum on Five Power Conference (document No. 546, enclosure; see under <i>Great Britain</i> ).	611	1103
Oct. 24	<i>The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports, in connexion with <i>démarche</i> by U.S. Ambassador in Berlin (recorded in document No. 611), has ascertained that Roosevelt not expected to take initiative for peace conference or in sphere of disarmament in foreseeable future.	626	1141

## USSR

Date	Subject	Doc.No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 8	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on treatment in Soviet press of declaration by Reich Government and of Hitler's speech.	29	52
Mar. 17	<i>The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the Soviet Union</i> Draws attention to statement in London <i>Times</i> that Soviet Ambassador in Britain has made official <i>démarche</i> to express Soviet opposition to any negotiations with German Government in present circumstances, and sends instructions on action to be taken.	141	184

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LXXIX

## USSR—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936			
Mar. 23	<i>The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry</i> Comments upon attitude of USSR to Germany's action in Rhineland and to resolutions of remaining Locarno Powers, as indicated in articles by Radek and speech by Litvinov.	194	261
Apr. 29	<i>Final Protocol on the German-Soviet Economic Discussions of April 29, 1936</i> Records signature of German-Soviet Treaty on exchange of goods and payments (annexed) together with supplementary documents.	302	488
May 6	<i>Memorandum by an Official of Department II</i> Records conversation with two members of Soviet Embassy, who believed negotiations on granting a credit might be resumed and commented upon obstacle to German-Soviet economic relations constituted by existing bad political relations.	312	512
May 20	<i>Herbert L. W. Göring to Ambassador Schulenburg</i> Letter stating that in view of importance of business with Russia has been instrumental in obtaining interview for Russian Trade delegates with his cousin General Göring. Encloses memorandum of interview.	341	571
May 22	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Russian Ambassador on British questionnaire, on Russian attitude to Straits question, and probable outcome of Anglo-Italian dispute over Abyssinia. Ambassador expressed satisfaction at outcome of German-Russian negotiations and enquired whether change in political relations to be expected.	342	573
May 25	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to Herbert L. W. Göring</i> Letter in reply to document No. 341.	347	581
July 3	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Consul Hencke</i> Letter enclosing comments by Military Attaché in Moscow on document No. 392 (see under <i>General Policy</i> ).	427	725
Sept. 12	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division IV</i> Comments, in connexion with current negotiations for extension of German-Russian Economic Treaty (document No. 302), on defects and advantages of Treaty.	535	964
Sept. 21	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division IV</i> Records information from Schacht that German-Russian economic negotiators to be received by Göring for continuation of discussions; negotiations apparently resumed at Russian request.	549	989
Oct. 12	<i>Ambassador Schulenburg to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff</i> Letter describing own reception on return to Soviet Union, reception accorded to new Spanish Ambassador, and position regarding German-Russian trade.	590	1066
Oct. 12	<i>Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep</i> Letter describing trade negotiations conducted in Russia by German businessman and enclosing copies of latter's credentials, which include note from Minister President Göring stating he attaches importance to doing business with Russians.	591	1068



## USSR—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Oct. 19	<i>Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division IV</i> Records conversation with official of Ministry of Economics about German-Russian economic questions.  [See also under <i>Naval Negotiations</i> .]	615	1115

## YUGOSLAVIA

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 Mar. 10	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Yugoslav Minister, who, on instructions from Prince Regent, informed him of Yugoslav attitude to Russia and of outcome of Czechoslovak Minister President's visit to Belgrade. Minister then enquired as to whether German action in Rhineland previously concerted with Mussolini, whether Austria included in German offer of non-aggression pacts, and as to remaining Locarno Powers' probable course in League Council.	48	78
Mar. 10	<i>Memorandum by the Foreign Minister</i> Records conversation with Yugoslav Minister concerning possible Yugoslav-Hungarian <i>rapprochement</i> .	49	79
Mar. 10	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports has learned from reliable source of view expressed by Minister President Stojadinović that Yugoslavia would not take part in sanctions against Germany.	56	84
Mar. 13	<i>Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II</i> Comments upon information, supplied by Reich Air Ministry, that Göring has appointed Franz Neuhausen in Belgrade as his special representative in South-Eastern Europe; has been unable to discover what duties allotted to Neuhausen.	105	143
Mar. 14	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Minister President that publication in Geneva of communiqué on attitude of Little and Balkan Ententes towards Rhineland question had taken place without Yugoslav concurrence and information quite untrue. Stojadinović further stated in confidence that determined not to take part in any sanctions against Germany.	114	153
Mar. 24	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports conversation with Deputy M.F.A. to whom set forth German views in document No. 176 (see under <i>Rhineland</i> ). Latter informed him of report received from London as to views of French Delegation there and Flandin's intentions.	202	278
Mar. 25	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on repercussions of German action of March 7 on Yugoslav foreign policy.	216	302
Mar. 27	<i>The Consulate at Zagreb to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on outcome of German-Yugoslav trade negotiations and requests permission to make certain concessions.	224	318

## ANALYTICAL LIST OF DOCUMENTS

LXXXI

## YUGOSLAVIA—continued

Date	Subject	Doc. No.	Page
1936 June 16	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on visit of President of Reichsbank to Belgrade, June 11-13.	376	630
July 14	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on reception in Yugoslavia of German-Austrian Agreement and on conversation with Yugoslav Minister President Stojadinović. Detects signs of anxiety in latter at possibility of German-Italian <i>rapprochement</i> and requests instructions.	449	765
July 16	<i>The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Yugoslavia</i> Refers to document No. 449 and informs Legation that press speculation about formation of Germano-Italo-Austro-Hungarian bloc unfounded, and that German-Austrian Agreement has eliminated likelihood of imminent Habsburg restoration.	452	769
Sept. 12	<i>Circular of the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports, for guidance on language to be held, views expressed by German Minister to Yugoslavia concerning possibility of improvement in Italo-Yugoslav relations.	534	962
Sept. 15	<i>The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry</i> Reports on attitude of Yugoslavia to Soviet Russia and Communism.	538	969
Oct. 12	<i>Ministerialdirektor Sarnow to Ministerialdirektor Ritter</i> Letter forwarding memorandum of first private conversation with chairman of Yugoslav Government Trade Committee, when they discussed German-Yugoslav trade relations and effect on general economic situation of devaluation of various currencies, and efforts which had been made to intensify relations between countries of Little Entente.  [See also under <i>Austria</i> .]	592	1070









[EDITORS' NOTE: In a number of the documents dealing with the German occupation of the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland and subsequent negotiations, reference is made to certain articles of the Treaty of Versailles (Treaty of Peace between the Allied and Associated Powers and Germany, signed at Versailles, June 28, 1919), of the Covenant of the League of Nations (which forms Part I of the Treaty of Versailles) and the Rhine Pact of Locarno (Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy, initialled October 16, 1925, which forms Annex A of the Final Protocol of the Locarno Conference, 1925).

For the convenience of readers the texts of those articles to which reference is most frequently made, are reproduced below.

*From the Covenant of the League of Nations* (including amendments in force in March 1936)

*Article 10:* "The Members of the League undertake to respect and preserve, as against external aggression, the territorial integrity and existing political independence of all Members of the League. In case of any such aggression, or in case of any threat or danger of such aggression, the Council shall advise upon the means by which this obligation shall be fulfilled."

*Article 11:* "1. Any war or threat of war, whether immediately affecting any of the Members of the League or not, is hereby declared a matter of concern to the whole League, and the League shall take any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations. In case any such emergency should arise the Secretary-General shall, on the request of any Member of the League, forthwith summon a meeting of the Council.

"2. It is also declared to be the friendly right of each Member of the League to bring to the attention of the Assembly or of the Council any circumstance whatever affecting international relations which threatens to disturb international peace or the good understanding between nations upon which peace depends."

*Article 13:* "1. The Members of the League agree that, whenever any dispute shall arise between them which they recognize to be suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement, and which cannot be satisfactorily settled by diplomacy, they will submit the whole subject-matter to arbitration or judicial settlement.

"2. Disputes as to the interpretation of a Treaty, as to any question of international law, as to the existence of any fact which, if established,

would constitute a breach of any international obligation, or as to the extent and nature of the reparation to be made for any such breach, are declared to be among those which are generally suitable for submission to arbitration or judicial settlement.

“3. For the consideration of any such dispute, the Court to which the case is referred shall be the Permanent Court of International Justice, established in accordance with Article 14, or any tribunal agreed on by the parties to the dispute or stipulated in any Convention existing between them.

“4. The Members of the League agree that they will carry out in full good faith any award or decision that may be rendered, and that they will not resort to war against a Member of the League which complies therewith. In the event of any failure to carry out such an award or decision, the Council shall propose what steps should be taken to give effect thereto.”

*Article 15:* “1. If there should arise between Members of the League any dispute likely to lead to a rupture, which is not submitted to arbitration or judicial settlement in accordance with Article 13, the Members of the League agree that they will submit the matter to the Council. Any party to the dispute may effect such submission by giving notice of the existence of the dispute to the Secretary-General, who will make all necessary arrangements for a full investigation and consideration thereof.

“2. For this purpose the parties to the dispute will communicate to the Secretary-General, as promptly as possible, statements of their case with all the relevant facts and papers, and the Council may forthwith direct the publication thereof.

“3. The Council shall endeavour to effect a settlement of the dispute, and, if such efforts are successful, a statement shall be made public giving such facts and explanations regarding the dispute and the terms of settlement thereof as the Council may deem appropriate.

“4. If the dispute is not thus settled, the Council, either unanimously or by a majority vote, shall make and publish a report containing a statement of the facts of the dispute and the recommendations which are deemed just and proper in regard thereto.

“5. Any Member of the League represented on the Council may make a public statement of the facts of the dispute and of its conclusions regarding the same.

“6. If a report by the Council is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League agree that they will not go to war with any party to the dispute which complies with the recommendations of the report.

“7. If the Council fails to reach a report which is unanimously agreed to by the members thereof, other than the representatives of one or

more of the parties to the dispute, the Members of the League reserve to themselves the right to take such action as they shall consider necessary for the maintenance of right and justice.

"8. If the dispute between the parties is claimed by one of them, and is found by the Council to arise out of a matter which by international law is solely within the domestic jurisdiction of that party, the Council shall so report, and shall make no recommendation as to its settlement.

"9. The Council may in any case under this Article refer the dispute to the Assembly. The dispute shall be so referred at the request of either party to the dispute provided that such request be made within fourteen days after the submission of the dispute to the Council.

"10. In any case referred to the Assembly, all the provisions of this Article and of Article 12, relating to the action and powers of the Council, shall apply to the action and powers of the Assembly, provided that a report made by the Assembly, if concurred in by the representatives of those Members of the League represented on the Council, and of a majority of the other Members of the League, exclusive in each case of the representatives of the parties to the dispute, shall have the same force as a report by the Council concurred in by all the members thereof other than the representatives of one or more of the parties to the dispute."

*Article 16:* "1. Should any Member of the League resort to war in disregard of its Covenants under Articles 12, 13 or 15, it shall *ipso facto* be deemed to have committed an act of war against all other Members of the League, which hereby undertake immediately to subject it to the severance of all trade or financial relations, the prohibition of all intercourse between their nationals and the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State, and the prevention of all financial, commercial or personal intercourse between the nationals of the Covenant-breaking State and the nationals of any other State, whether a Member of the League or not.

"2. It shall be the duty of the Council in such case to recommend to the several Governments concerned what effective military, naval or air force the Members of the League shall severally contribute to the armed forces to be used to protect the Covenants of the League.

"3. The Members of the League agree, further, that they will mutually support one another in the financial and economic measures which are taken under this Article, in order to minimize the loss and inconvenience resulting from the above measures, and that they will mutually support one another in resisting any special measures aimed at one of their number by the Covenant-breaking State, and that they will take the necessary steps to afford passage through their territory to the forces of any of the Members of the League which are co-operating to protect the Covenants of the League.

"4. Any Member of the League which has violated any Covenant of



the League may be declared to be no longer a Member of the League by a vote of the Council concurred in by the representatives of all the other Members of the League represented thereon."

*Article 17:* "1. In the event of a dispute between a Member of the League and a State which is not a Member of the League, or between States not Members of the League, the State or States not Members of the League shall be invited to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, upon such conditions as the Council may deem just. If such invitation is accepted, the provisions of Articles 12 to 16 inclusive shall be applied with such modifications as may be deemed necessary by the Council.

"2. Upon such invitation being given, the Council shall immediately institute an enquiry into the circumstances of the dispute, and recommend such action as may seem best and most effectual in the circumstances.

"3. If a State so invited shall refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, and shall resort to war against a Member of the League, the provisions of Article 16 shall be applicable as against the State taking such action.

"4. If both parties to the dispute, when so invited, refuse to accept the obligations of membership in the League for the purposes of such dispute, the Council may take such measures and make such recommendations as will prevent hostilities and will result in the settlement of the dispute."

*From the Treaty of Versailles* (Part III, section III—Left Bank of the Rhine)

*Article 42.* "Germany is forbidden to maintain or construct any fortifications either on the left bank of the Rhine or on the right bank to the west of a line drawn 50 kilometres to the East of the Rhine.

*Article 43.* "In the area defined above the maintenance and the assembly of armed forces, either permanently or temporarily, and military manœuvres of any kind, as well as the upkeep of all permanent works of mobilization, are in the same way forbidden."

*Article 44.* "In case Germany violates in any manner whatever the provisions of Articles 42 and 43, she shall be regarded as committing a hostile act against the Powers signatory of the present Treaty and as calculated to disturb the peace of the world."

*From The (Locarno) Treaty of Mutual Guarantee*

*Article 1.* "The high contracting parties collectively and severally guarantee, in the manner provided in the following articles, the maintenance of the territorial *status quo* resulting from the frontiers

between Germany and Belgium and between Germany and France and the inviolability of the said frontiers as fixed by or in pursuance of the Treaty of Peace signed at Versailles on the 28th June, 1919, and also the observance of the stipulations of articles 42 and 43 of the said treaty concerning the demilitarized zone."

*Article 2.* "Germany and Belgium, and also Germany and France, mutually undertake that they will in no case attack or invade each other or resort to war against each other.

"This stipulation shall not, however, apply in the case of—

"1. The exercise of the right of legitimate defence, that is to say, resistance to a violation of the undertaking contained in the previous paragraph or to a flagrant breach of articles 42 and 43 of the said Treaty of Versailles, if such breach constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression and by reason of the assembly of armed forces in the demilitarized zone immediate action is necessary.

"2. Action in pursuance of article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

"3. Action as the result of a decision taken by the Assembly or by the Council of the League of Nations or in pursuance of article 15, paragraph 7, of the Covenant of the League of Nations, provided that in this last event the action is directed against a State which was the first to attack."

*Article 3.* "In view of the undertakings entered into in article 2 of the present treaty, Germany and Belgium and Germany and France undertake to settle by peaceful means and in the manner laid down herein all questions of every kind which may arise between them and which it may not be possible to settle by the normal methods of diplomacy:

"Any question with regard to which the parties are in conflict as to their respective rights shall be submitted to judicial decision, and all parties undertake to comply with such decision.

"All other questions shall be submitted to a conciliation commission. If the proposals of this commission are not accepted by the two parties, the question shall be brought before the Council of the League of Nations, which will deal with it in accordance with article 15 of the Covenant of the League.

"The detailed arrangements for effecting such peaceful settlement are the subject of special agreements signed this day."

*Article 4.* "1. If one of the high contracting parties alleges that a violation of article 2 of the present treaty or a breach of articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles has been or is being committed, it shall bring the question at once before the Council of the League of Nations.

"2. As soon as the Council of the League of Nations is satisfied that

such violation or breach has been committed, it will notify its finding without delay to the Powers signatory of the present treaty, who severally agree that in such case they will each of them come immediately to the assistance of the Power against whom the act complained of is directed.

"3. In case of a flagrant violation of article 2 of the present treaty or of a flagrant breach of articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles by one of the high contracting parties, each of the other contracting parties hereby undertakes immediately to come to the help of the party against whom such a violation or breach has been directed as soon as the said Power has been able to satisfy itself that this violation constitutes an unprovoked act of aggression and that by reason either of the crossing of the frontier or of the outbreak of hostilities or of the assembly of armed forces in the demilitarized zone immediate action is necessary. Nevertheless, the Council of the League of Nations, which will be seized of the question in accordance with the first paragraph of this article, will issue its findings, and the high contracting parties undertake to act in accordance with the recommendations of the Council provided that they are concurred in by all the members other than the representatives of the parties which have engaged in hostilities."

*Article 5.* "The provisions of article 3 of the present treaty are placed under the guarantee of the high contracting parties as provided by the following stipulations:—

"If one of the Powers referred to in article 3 refuses to submit a dispute to peaceful settlement or to comply with an arbitral or judicial decision and commits a violation of article 2 of the present treaty or a breach of articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles, the provisions of article 4 shall apply.

"Where one of the Powers referred to in article 3 without committing a violation of article 2 of the present treaty or a breach of articles 42 or 43 of the Treaty of Versailles, refuses to submit a dispute to peaceful settlement or to comply with an arbitral or judicial decision, the other party shall bring the matter before the Council of the League of Nations, and the Council shall propose what steps shall be taken; the high contracting parties shall comply with these proposals."]

## No. 1

8015/E576455-56

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 14 of March 5

GENEVA, March 5, 1936.

Received March 5—9:20 p.m.

III O 1195.

1) The peace appeal addressed to Italy and Abyssinia<sup>1</sup> by the Committee of Thirteen is generally regarded by the delegations at Geneva as a tactical success for Flandin, who has thus prevented precipitate decisions on the sanctions question, and offered the Italians a chance to enter negotiations. It is expected here that Italy and Abyssinia will accept the peace appeal in such a way as to make it possible for a discussion on the settlement of the conflict to be started next week; but at the same time it is pointed out that the value of Flandin's action is, up to now, only formal and provisional, since it is considered unlikely that the British will make any real concessions to Italy. It is characteristic that it was precisely members of the French and Italian delegations who expressed extreme scepticism to me concerning the prospects of success for the discussion planned for next week. The Italian and French delegates to whom I spoke both said, and this agrees with statements from other delegations,<sup>2</sup> that they were afraid that the British might lay down conditions for the suspension of hostilities and as to the basis of the peace negotiations which Italy would at the moment not be able to accept, particularly in view of the present military situation in Abyssinia.

2) As to the origins of the peace appeal formula, Bova Scoppa<sup>3</sup> told me that Flandin had informed him that the British had insisted that the resolution of the Committee of Thirteen should demand the immediate suspension of hostilities, the continuation of sanctions, the acceptance of the report of the Committee of Five<sup>4</sup> as the basis for the peace negotiations, and a reply within 48 hours. After consultation with

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the appeal adopted by the Committee of Thirteen and despatched to the Abyssinian and Italian Governments on Mar. 3, 1936, which called on both belligerents to enter into immediate negotiations with a view to the prompt cessation of hostilities and the definite restoration of peace. It added that the Committee of Thirteen would meet on Mar. 10, to take cognizance of the replies of the two Governments. For the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 395.

<sup>2</sup> Krauel had reported on conversations with members of various delegations in Geneva in telegram No. 12 of Mar. 3 (8023/E577585-89).

<sup>3</sup> Head of the permanent Italian Delegation to the League of Nations.

<sup>4</sup> Of Sept. 24, 1935; for the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1935, pp. 1620-1621.



Rome, Flandin had been informed that a "peace appeal" couched in these terms could naturally not be accepted by Italy. The British had eventually agreed to the flexible wording with which you are familiar.<sup>5</sup> Undoubtedly, however—and this is also Bova Scoppa's view—the discussion will, at the very start of negotiations next week, immediately centre on these British demands, and they will be advocated most emphatically by the British, supported by Russia and other States.

My Italian colleague believes that Italy's threat to withdraw from the League of Nations has not failed to achieve its effect in this connection. He took this opportunity expressly to confirm, however, in reply to a cautious question from me coupled with a reference to press reports, that his instructions had merely been to state that Italy would leave the League of Nations if sanctions were made more severe, but that there was no question of Italy's threatening to denounce the Locarno Treaty, and that in his conversations with Flandin Germany had not been mentioned at all. Nor, at the secret meeting of the Committee of Thirteen on the acceptance of the peace appeal, as this Consulate has learned from a reliable source, did Flandin refer to the political situation in Europe when stating the reasons in favour of a peaceful settlement of the conflict, but merely mentioned

(a) the danger to the League of Nations,

(b) the concept of peace and

(c) the serious financial and economic position common to all countries.

The Russian and Turkish representatives, too, have merely expressed general desires for peace in support of the French proposal, and Eden gave no further reason at all for the British consent. Continuation follows.<sup>6</sup>

KRAUEL

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<sup>5</sup> The text of the appeal (see footnote 1 above) had been transmitted to Berlin by Krauel in telegram No. 13 of Mar. 4 (M278/M011487).

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 2.

## No. 2

8015/E576457-59

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 15 of March 5

GENEVA, March 5, 1936—9:25 p.m.

Continuation of

Received March 5—11:35 p.m.

telegram No. 14<sup>1</sup>

III O 1196.

3) In this connection it can be definitely said that the conversations between Flandin and Eden in Geneva, announced by a section of the foreign press, on the subject of joint Anglo-French action in the event of Germany violating the Locarno Treaty have not, as yet, taken place. Eden expressly denied these rumours in a conversation of some length with Vernon Bartlett<sup>2</sup> shortly before leaving Geneva, and he further stated that he was now less concerned than he had been about the German attitude. On this occasion Eden described the interview recently granted by the Führer to the representative of *Paris Midi*<sup>3</sup> and the new German-British naval conversations<sup>4</sup> as a very "hopeful contribution towards a *détente*", and added that he hoped, during his present stay in London, to be able extensively to further the German-British discussions. When I asked in what way they were to be furthered, Bartlett replied that Eden was still thinking primarily of an air pact and had told him, when he remarked on the difficulties and on the desires of the French to have an extension of the discussions to include disarmament on land, that Flandin, apparently influenced by the above-mentioned interview with the Reich Chancellor, was also taking an optimistic view of the possibilities of an understanding with Germany. In this connection, however, Bartlett pointed out that British policy would probably pay great attention to Russia in these negotiations because, amongst other reasons, French public opinion had been greatly impressed by the very special honour paid to Litvinov by the British King,<sup>5</sup> and because the pro-Russian mood in Britain was growing.

4) To help in assessing the British attitude in the Abyssinian conflict, the following observations made by Eden in his confidential conversation with Bartlett are also worth mentioning. In explanation of the fact that the French Government were informed for the first time in Geneva of the rigorous British attitude in the sanctions question Eden pointed to the well-known Paris indiscretions on the occasion of

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 1.

<sup>2</sup> British correspondent of the *News Chronicle*.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 604, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 589, 596, 601 and 605 and this volume, document No. 6 and *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Litvinov had had an audience with King Edward VIII on Jan. 29, 1936.

the Laval-Hoare Plan<sup>6</sup> and of the leakage of secret British documents about British interests in Abyssinia.<sup>7</sup> Moreover, the British Cabinet's instructions to Eden had been to the effect that in Geneva Britain should advocate the intensification of sanctions and especially the introduction of the oil embargo,<sup>8</sup> but without appearing to take the initiative. When Flandin had learned in Geneva of the rigorous British attitude over the sanctions question he had been much dismayed and had then fallen back on the expedient of the peace appeal.<sup>9</sup> Eden had thereupon consulted with London and had obtained authority to make the familiar harsh statement in the Committee of Eighteen<sup>10</sup> and thus, contrary to what was originally intended, to assume *open* leadership in the question of intensifying sanctions. In these circumstances, Anglo-French ill-feeling had been unavoidable, and this ill-feeling would also of course frequently crop up again during the probable further discussions on the Italo-Abyssinian conflict. In any case, Eden made it a condition of the peace appeal that the Committee of Eighteen should continue to deal with the sanctions question, and agreement was also reached between Flandin and Eden that during further negotiations and until peace should be concluded, the sanctions hitherto applied should remain in force.

Bartlett further emphasized that the present British Government, and in particular Eden himself, could not, in the circumstances, and in view of the pro-League of Nations and anti-Italian feeling at present prevalent among the British public, yield at all over the sanctions question. The aim of British policy was at all costs to render impossible the resumption of hostilities in Abyssinia at the end of the rainy season. The moment conversations started next week, it would become apparent that British policy, though it had yielded over the form of the peace appeal, would remain firm in the essentials. These remarks about the British attitude further justify the scepticism prevailing among the delegations at Geneva as to the prospects of success for Flandin's improvised attempt at peace negotiations.

KRAUEL

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<sup>6</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 457 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> Extracts from a report by a British interdepartmental Committee (the Maffey Report) were published in the *Giornale d'Italia* of Feb. 20, 1936. See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 590.

<sup>8</sup> A Committee of Experts was set up by the League's Committee of Eighteen on Jan. 22, 1936, to examine the trade in and transport of petroleum and its by-products with a view to reporting on the effectiveness of extending embargo measures to these commodities (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 148, pp. 7-9). For the Report of the Committee of Experts of Feb. 12, 1936, see *ibid.*, pp. 64-85. On Mar. 2 the Committee of Eighteen reassembled in Geneva and considered this report; on Mar. 4 they asked the Committee of Experts to examine the methods of applying an oil sanction (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 149, pp. 9-14).

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 1, footnote 1.

<sup>10</sup> For the text of Eden's statement of Mar. 2, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 149, p. 13.

## No. 3

6710/E506196-207

*The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Great Britain, France,  
Italy and Belgium*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 5, 1936.  
e.o. II R 271 Ang. I.  
[RM 178 Ang. I]<sup>2</sup>

1) The Führer and Chancellor intends to summon the Reichstag to meet on March 7 at twelve noon (Central European Time), to proclaim, publicly and with reference to the Alliance between France and the Soviet Union, the restoration of German sovereignty in the demilitarized Rhineland zone. This restoration of German sovereignty will be made known to the other signatories of the Locarno Rhine Pact simultaneously through diplomatic channels. I would therefore request you personally to convey the enclosed Memorandum<sup>3</sup> on Saturday morning to the Government to which you are accredited, that is to say, to the Foreign Minister himself or to his deputy. If it should prove impossible to communicate it yourself on Saturday morning, you should send the Memorandum at that time to the Foreign Ministry with a short accompanying note to the effect that you have been instructed by your Government to transmit to the Government to which you are accredited the enclosed Memorandum on the effects of the Alliance between France and the Soviet Union on the Locarno Rhine Pact. You should not enclose a translation of the Memorandum.

2) The Memorandum will also be conveyed on Saturday morning to the Governments in Warsaw, Prague, and the Hague, for their information.<sup>4</sup>

3) It is intended to signalize the restoration of sovereignty in the Rhineland zone during the course of Saturday by the entry of some small Wehrmacht contingents.<sup>5</sup>

4) If you communicate the Memorandum personally I would request you to elucidate the main points contained in it along the following lines:

The factual grounds for the Reich Government's decision are

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<sup>1</sup> These Missions and the addressees of document No. 4 had been requested by telegram of Mar. 5 (6710/E506195) to ensure unobtrusively that a *démarche* could be carried out on the morning of Saturday, Mar. 7; the instructions for this would arrive by special courier.

<sup>2</sup> The document here printed and documents Nos. 4 and 7 had first been given the registry number RM 178, Angabe I, II and III respectively, and had been despatched under that number; this was changed at a later date to the number II R 271, Angabe I, II and III.

<sup>3</sup> See enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 4.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 1218.



briefly summarized in the Memorandum itself. That the Rhine Pact entailed respecting the demilitarization provisions could from the first only be regarded as unjustifiable discrimination against Germany. Nevertheless, as the Führer and Chancellor stated in his great Reichstag speech of May 21, 1935,<sup>6</sup> the present Reich Government too would have been prepared to accept this anomaly if France, for her part, had not violated the Rhine Pact and created an entirely new situation. As a result of the Franco-Soviet Alliance,<sup>7</sup> and the parallel Alliance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union<sup>8</sup> brought about by this Alliance, the political and military position of Germany has markedly deteriorated. We are, therefore, forced to offset this deterioration to some extent at least by extending our defensive possibilities in the Rhineland.

You should, in particular, point out that, through the offer of a treaty which is contained in the latter part of the Memorandum, we are, in spite of the breach of treaty of which we assert France to be guilty, politically upholding the truly essential basic principles of the Rhine Pact and are giving them added force through our agreement to an air pact and to the inclusion of the Netherlands in the treaty system. The treaty offered by us is in consequence actually the old Rhine Pact adjusted to the present situation. If the other side should ask whether our offer of a treaty, especially the offer of a German-French undertaking to renounce war, is to be interpreted to mean that France will still be able to maintain her existing alliances, including the treaty with the Soviet Union, you may reply that in your personal opinion the answer is in the affirmative, since the Memorandum explicitly speaks of adjusting the basic principles of the Rhine Pact to the present situation, and since the purpose of Germany's action is obviously to obtain an equivalent to the conclusion of the new Franco-Soviet Alliance by being released from the demilitarization clauses.

Even more important than the willingness to cooperate shown by our offer of a treaty is the declaration of our readiness to return to the League of Nations. We expect the other nations to appreciate duly the importance of this decision, and to acknowledge the contribution which Germany is thus making to a *détente*. Our decision should be valued the more highly since, in taking it, we are refraining from making the solution of other important problems—such as the colonial question and the question of the German rivers<sup>9</sup>—conditions for our return to

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<sup>6</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>7</sup> For the text of the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Mutual Assistance and its accompanying Protocol of Signature, both signed on May 2, 1935, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXVII, pp. 395-406.

<sup>8</sup> For the text of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance of May 16, 1935, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLIX, pp. 347-361.

<sup>9</sup> The reference is to the provisions for navigation on the rivers Elbe, Moldau, Oder, Niemen, Danube, Rhine and Moselle contained in Articles 331-362 of the Treaty of Versailles.

the League of Nations. Naturally, we are not in point of fact abandoning our position on these questions. The fact that we are not insisting on their solution before our return to the League of Nations is, however, a very important step. The other Powers may now consider that something which they have always described as one of the most important aims of European policy, namely, that the Third Reich should accede to the concept of collective security embodied in the Geneva institution, has been achieved.

We shall, of course, have to expect the expostulation that what is objectionable in our action lies in the unilateral denunciation of a pact which had been freely accepted, and in the creation of a *fait accompli*. To this you should reply, firstly, that in our view it was France who began it with her unilateral action over her new alliance and that we have been continually inviting attention to this since May of last year. It should, further, be remembered that, in view of all our experiences in recent years, and particularly in view of the course which the disarmament negotiations took, we could not have any hopes of success if we tried, by means of negotiation, to induce France to relinquish the demilitarization clauses. Our standpoint in principle would also have been prejudiced if we had made our right to reoccupy the Rhineland dependent on France's consent being obtained by means of negotiation. Finally, we must reckon with the possibility of an extension of the new French alliance system and of its being supplemented by a Rumanian-Soviet pact, as a result of which Germany's political and military position would further deteriorate. In view of the whole development of French policy, we cannot be expected passively and for an indefinite period to watch our military situation deteriorating and to refrain from making use of the defensive possibilities of our whole territory.

5) If the other side should refer to the possibility, already mentioned by Flandin in his speech in the Chamber,<sup>10</sup> of submitting the German-French dispute to the Hague Court of Justice for decision, you should say that in your view such a step would be pointless and would certainly not help to ease the situation. For one thing it is, even on legal grounds, very doubtful, to say the least, whether a question such as the interpretation of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations could be brought before the Hague Court of Justice at all. Quite apart from this, the Court could never settle the political side of the question, on which, together with the legal aspect, Germany has always laid primary stress.

6) For your personal information I would draw attention to the following points. Even on the basis of the French view that the new Alliance is compatible with the Rhine Pact, the entry of German

<sup>10</sup> On Feb. 25, 1936; for the text see *Journal Officiel de la République Française, Débats Parlementaires, Chambre des Députés*, 1936, pp. 578-584.

Wehrmacht contingents can by no means be regarded as a flagrant breach of the demilitarization provisions in the sense of Article 2, paragraph 2, subsection 1, and of Article 4, subsection 3 of the Rhine Pact,<sup>11</sup> with the effect of allowing France to react immediately by taking military counter-action assisted by Britain and Italy. For such an immediate counter-action would, even on the basis of the French view, be possible only if the alleged German action against the demilitarization provisions constituted an unprovoked act of aggression, and if, as a result of the concentration of armed forces in the demilitarized zone, immediate action became necessary. There can, of course, be no question of this in the case of the peaceful entry of German battalions (for your information: and of some air force and anti-aircraft formations) to their new garrisons. From the French point of view it would, therefore, only be possible to appeal to the Council of the League of Nations in accordance with Article 4, subsection 1 of the Rhine Pact. You should, naturally, only go more closely into these provisions under the Rhine Pact if the other side should, of their own accord, mention the possibility of French counter-action.

If the objection should be raised that the Reich Government should at least have waited till the Franco-Soviet Pact was ratified, you should reply that on February 28 the French Chamber accepted the Pact by 353 votes to 164, with 47 abstentions, and the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate accepted it on March 4 by 19 votes to 4, with 7 abstentions. There could therefore no longer be any doubt as to the result of the vote of the Senate in plenary session.

(Addition for London only:)

7) *Vis-à-vis* Mr. Eden or his deputy, you should emphasize particularly that the Reich Government's decision to declare themselves prepared to return to the League of Nations was not an easy one, and that the desire to meet as far as possible the British Government's policy, which has become so closely connected with the League of Nations, was a consideration of no small weight. We hope that we have thus given the British Government an opportunity effectually to counteract a possible tendency in France to react rashly to our step. We are of course aware, and regret, that the British Government, by their approval of the French reply to our Memorandum of May 25 of last year,<sup>12</sup> have in a way committed themselves to the French thesis; this should not, however, prevent them from doing justice to our political views now. They should not forget that our offers now provide an opportunity of taking a decisive step towards the consolidation of European policy. If this chance were to be let slip, or if the other Powers were to take our action as cause for forming a united front against Germany, then the whole of European politics would for a long time

<sup>11</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1.

<sup>12</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 107 (enclosure), 170 and 196.



to come be subjected to a serious strain. We are convinced that the British Government are in a position to prevent this in the general interests of Europe.

(Addition for Rome only:)

7) *Vis-à-vis* Signor Mussolini, you should also emphasize that our readiness to return to the League of Nations will of course in no way alter our previous attitude to the Abyssinian question. If the other Powers take up our offer of a treaty, the ensuing negotiations will certainly take a long time. It is therefore to be expected that our return to Geneva will only take place at a time when the Abyssinian question will already have been solved. In view of the attitude which Signor Mussolini revealed in his recent conversations with you,<sup>13</sup> we hope that we may count on him to exert his influence towards a peaceful and reasonable treatment of the questions brought up by our action. If we declare the Locarno Rhine Pact to be broken and therefore finished with, Italy will, as a result, acquire a valuable trump card, in as much as the fresh settlement of the Western problem, which we have offered the other Powers, depends on her consent as well.

(For all four despatches:)

It is not at present intended to publish the enclosed Memorandum, but the right to publish it is of course reserved.

You should report at once by telegram on the reception accorded to your *démarche*.

V. NEURATH

6710/E506208-16

[Enclosure]<sup>14</sup>

Immediately after the Pact, signed on May 2, 1935, between France and the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, became known, the German Government drew the attention of the other Powers signatories to the Locarno Rhine Pact to the fact that the obligations assumed by France in the new Pact were not compatible with her obligations arising from the Rhine Pact. The German Government at that time explained their point of view fully in both its legal and its political aspect—namely in its legal aspect in the German Memorandum of May 25, 1935, in its political aspect in the many diplomatic conversations which followed on this Memorandum. It is also known to the Governments concerned that neither their written replies to the German Memorandum nor the arguments brought forward by them through diplomatic channels or

<sup>13</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 485, 525 and 579.

<sup>14</sup> The text of the Memorandum here printed is the final version communicated on Mar. 7. The Memorandum originally despatched (7880/E570582-92) contained two textual errors, and in a telegram of Mar. 6 (6710/E506229) the Missions were asked to amend these. In another telegram of Mar. 6 (6710/E506230-31) the addressees of this document and of document No. 4, except the Legation at the Hague, were instructed to make further amendments to the original Memorandum; the original text of the amended passages is given in footnote 15 below.



in public declarations were able to invalidate the German Government's point of view.

In fact the whole discussion which has taken place through diplomatic channels and in public on these questions since May 1935 has only been able to confirm in all its points the view expressed by the German Government at the outset.

1. It is undisputed that the Franco-Soviet Treaty is directed exclusively against Germany.

2. It is undisputed that in it France undertakes, in the event of a conflict between Germany and the Soviet Union, obligations which go far beyond her duty as laid down in the Covenant of the League of Nations, and which compel her to take military action against Germany even when she is not called upon to do so either by a recommendation or indeed an actual decision of the Council of the League of Nations.

3. It is undisputed that France in such a case claims for herself the right to decide on her own judgement who is the aggressor.

4. It is thereby established that France has assumed towards the Soviet Union obligations which in practice mean that, when occasion arises, she would act as if neither the Covenant of the League of Nations, nor the Rhine Pact which refers to this Covenant, were valid.

This result of the Franco-Soviet Treaty is not removed by the fact that France, in the Treaty, made the reservation, that she did not intend to be bound to take military action against Germany if by such action she would expose herself to sanctions on the part of the guarantor Powers, Italy and Great Britain. Regarding this reservation the fact is decisive that the Rhine Pact is not based only on the obligations of Great Britain and Italy as guarantor Powers, but primarily on the obligations prescribed in the relations between France and Germany. It is therefore exclusively a question of whether France, in assuming these treaty obligations, has confined herself within those limits imposed upon her in her relations with Germany by the Rhine Pact.

This question the German Government must answer in the negative.

The Rhine Pact was to have achieved the object of securing peace in Western Europe by providing that Germany on the one hand and France and Belgium on the other, in their relations to one another, should renounce for all future time the use of military force. If at the conclusion of the Pact certain exceptions to this renunciation of war going beyond the right of self-defence were admitted, the political reason for this, as is generally known, lay solely in the fact that France had already assumed certain obligations towards Poland and Czechoslovakia, which she did not wish to sacrifice to the conception of an absolute guarantee of peace in the West. Germany, with her own clear conscience on this matter, at the time accepted these limitations on the renunciation of war. She did not raise objections to the treaties with Poland and Czechoslovakia, laid on the table at Locarno by the French

representative, solely on the obvious assumption that these treaties were in conformity with the construction of the Rhine Pact and contained no provisions of any sort regarding the application of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, such as those envisaged in the new Franco-Soviet agreements. The contents of these special agreements, as they became known to the German Government at that time, fulfilled this condition. The exceptions admitted in the Rhine Pact were not indeed specifically confined to Poland and Czechoslovakia, but were formulated as an abstract principle. It was, however, the intention of all the negotiations on this subject merely to find a compromise between the renunciation of war by Germany and France and the wish of France to maintain her already existing alliance obligations. If, therefore, France now utilizes the possibility of war admitted by the abstract wording of the Rhine Pact in order to conclude a new alliance against Germany with a highly armed, militarized State, if she thus further and in so decisive a manner restricts the scope of the renunciation of war agreed upon between herself and Germany, and if in this connection she, as shown above, does not even observe the prescribed formal legal limits, then she has thereby created an entirely new position and has destroyed the political system of the Rhine Pact, not only in spirit but also in fact.

The latest debates and decisions of the French parliament have shown that, in spite of German representations, France is determined to put the Pact with the Soviet Union definitively into force. A diplomatic conversation has even revealed that France already regards herself as bound by her signature of this Pact on May 2, 1935. In face of such a development in European politics, the German Government, however, if they do not wish to neglect or abandon the interests of the German people which they have the duty of safeguarding, cannot remain inactive.

During the negotiations in recent years the German Government have constantly emphasized their readiness to observe and fulfil all the obligations arising from the Rhine Pact as long as the other contracting parties were prepared for their part to adhere to this Pact. This obvious precondition can no longer be regarded as being fulfilled by France. France has answered the repeated friendly offers and peaceful assurances made by Germany with a military alliance with the Soviet Union directed exclusively against Germany, thus violating the Rhine Pact. In consequence, the Locarno Rhine Pact has, therefore, lost its inner meaning and has in practice ceased to exist. Consequently Germany regards herself for her part as no longer bound by this dissolved Pact. The German Government are now forced to face the new situation created by this alliance, a situation which is rendered more acute by the fact that the Franco-Soviet Treaty has been supplemented by a Treaty of Alliance between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union exactly parallel in form. In the interests of a nation's primitive right

to secure its frontiers and to ensure its possibilities of defence, the German Reich Government have therefore today restored the full and unrestricted sovereignty of Germany in the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland.

In order, however, to avoid any misinterpretation of their intentions and to establish beyond doubt the purely defensive character of this action as well as to give expression to their eternal and abiding longing for a real pacification of Europe among States enjoying equality of rights and parity of esteem, the German Government declare themselves prepared to conclude new agreements for the creation of a system guaranteeing peace for Europe on the basis of the following proposals.

(1) The German Government declare themselves prepared to enter at once into negotiations with France and Belgium on the creation of a zone demilitarized on both sides, and to give their agreement in advance to such a proposal, whatever its depth and effect [*in jeder Tiefe und Auswirkung*], on the condition of full parity.

(2) The German Government propose, for the purpose of ensuring the integrity and inviolability of frontiers in the West, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between Germany, France and Belgium, the duration of which they are prepared to fix at 25 years.<sup>15</sup>

(3) The German Government desire to invite Great Britain and Italy to sign this treaty as guarantor Powers.<sup>15</sup>

(4) The German Government agree, in case the Royal Netherlands Government so desire and the other contracting parties consider it appropriate, to bring the Netherlands into this treaty system.<sup>15</sup>

(5) The German Government are prepared, in order to strengthen further the security agreements between the Western Powers, to conclude an air pact calculated to prevent automatically and effectively the danger of sudden air attacks.

(6) The German Government repeat their offer to conclude non-aggression pacts, similar to that with Poland,<sup>16</sup> with the States bordering on Germany in the East. As the Lithuanian Government have in the last few months rectified their attitude towards the Memel Territory to a certain extent, the German Government withdraw the exception which they once had to make regarding Lithuania, and

<sup>15</sup> In the original memorandum (see footnote 14 above) paragraphs 2 to 5 read:

"2. The German Government propose to the French and Belgian Governments the conclusion of a non-aggression pact with Germany, the duration of which they are prepared to fix at 25 years.

3. The German Government desire to invite Great Britain and Italy to sign these treaties as guarantor Powers.

4. The German Government propose the conclusion of a tripartite Treaty of Guarantee between Germany, Great Britain and France, which should guarantee the safety and inviolability of Belgium, under all conditions and in every case, for all time.

5. The German Government agree, in case the Royal Netherlands Government so desire and the other contracting parties consider it appropriate, to bring the Netherlands into this treaty system under the same conditions as Belgium."

The present paragraphs 4 to 7 had previously been numbered 5-8.

<sup>16</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.



declare their readiness to sign such a non-aggression pact with Lithuania also, on condition that the guaranteed autonomy of the Memel Territory is effectively developed.

(7) Now that Germany's equality of rights and the restoration of full sovereignty over the entire territory of the German Reich has been finally attained, the German Government consider the chief reason for their withdrawal from the League of Nations to have been removed. They are therefore prepared to return to the League of Nations. In this connection they express the expectation that the question of colonial equality of rights as well as the question of the separation of the Covenant of the League of Nations from its Versailles setting will be clarified through friendly negotiations in the course of a reasonable period of time.

## No. 4

6710/E506217-18

### *The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Poland, Czechoslovakia and the Netherlands*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 5, 1936.

e.o. II R 271 Ang. II.

[RM 178 Ang. II]<sup>2</sup>

I enclose a copy of a despatch<sup>1</sup> sent to the Embassies in London, Paris and Rome, and also to the Legation in Brussels, together with two copies of the Memorandum sent with it.

You should personally communicate a copy of the Memorandum to the Foreign Minister there, or to his deputy, on Saturday morning, and, in doing so, make appropriate use of the observations contained in the enclosed despatch.

If it should prove impossible to communicate the Memorandum personally on Saturday morning, you should transmit the Memorandum to the Foreign Ministry there with a short covering note, as provided for in the enclosed despatch.

(Addition for the Hague only:)

When communicating the Memorandum,<sup>3</sup> you should state that the inclusion of the Netherlands in our proposals is to be taken as a friendly gesture towards this neighbouring country. We have been prompted to make this gesture by the fact that in public discussions during recent

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 3, and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, footnote 2.

<sup>3</sup> No instructions to the Legation at the Hague to alter the wording of the Memorandum (see document No. 3, footnotes 14 and 15), apart from the correction of the two textual errors, have been found in the Foreign Ministry files.



years the idea repeatedly came up that a special political guarantee for the "Low Countries"<sup>4</sup> (Belgium and the Netherlands) was required. We therefore wish to give the Netherlands the opportunity of participating from the beginning—should they so desire—in the reorganization of treaty relations in the West. We are of course aware that the decision in the question as to whether this idea is to be carried further rests in the first place with the Netherlands Government, whose attitude we do not wish to prejudice in any way.

NEURATH

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<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 5

6001/E443099-101

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

Geh. 27 II<sup>1</sup>

ROME, March 5, 1936.

Received March 8.

II It. 259.

Subject: Memorandum on some aspects of a conversation between Mussolini and Ambassador von Hassell on February 22 of this year.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 22 of March 3.<sup>3</sup>

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the memorandum, handed to me by Signor Suvich, on some aspects of my conversation with Mussolini on February 22 of this year, together with a German translation.<sup>4</sup>

Typical of the tendency to treat France gently, at present observable here, is the fact that, in his speech of March 3 to the Council of Ministers,<sup>5</sup> Mussolini declared that the attempt made in Paris to settle the Danubian question without Italy had not been approved by France, while the memorandum states, correctly, that he had expressed the opinion to me that the impending meeting between Austria, Hungary and Italy was necessary in order to counter Czechoslovakia's attempts, which had the support of France, to draw Austria closer to herself.

HASSELL

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 598.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 579.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. iv of this Series, document No. 603.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (6001/E443102-03/1).

<sup>5</sup> For the text of this speech see Benito Mussolini: *Scritti e Discorsi dell' Impero* (Novembre 1935—xiv—4 Novembre 1936—xv E. F.) (Milano, 1936), pp. 45-47.

[Enclosure]<sup>6</sup>

ROME, February 22—XIV.

SALIENT FEATURES OF A CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE HEAD  
OF THE GOVERNMENT AND THE GERMAN AMBASSADOR

Ambassador von Hassell asked what Italy would do if an embargo were placed on petroleum.

The Head of the Government replied that if sanctions were made more stringent in any way we should withdraw from the League of Nations.

The Head [of the Government] was of the opinion that, in the event of our withdrawal from the League of Nations, the function of Locarno too would cease.

The Ambassador stated that the German Government had not yet reached a decision on their reaction in the event of ratification of the Franco-Russian Pact. He then asked what the Italian Government would do in a similar case.

The Head of the Government replied that, although we did not view the Franco-Russian Pact sympathetically, we had not yet reached any decision on the subject; we were not directly interested; we were waiting to see what the German attitude would be. He could, however, say at once that we would not participate in any counter-reaction which might be called forth by a German reaction to the ratification of the Franco-Russian Pact.

The Ambassador expressed some doubts regarding the interpretation which might be put on the tripartite meeting between Italy, Austria and Hungary, which might give the impression of a somewhat unfriendly attitude towards Germany.

The Head of the Government declared that this first meeting was, actually, in accordance with the well-known line of Italian policy, although certain factors in the political situation, and in particular relations between our two countries, had changed.

With regard to the necessity of maintaining the independence of Austria, Herr von Hassell knew that we were intransigent.

The Head of the Government added that Italy desired a normalization of relations between Germany and Austria.

On the other hand, this meeting, at the present juncture, constituted a necessary *mise à point*<sup>7</sup> against Czechoslovakia's attempts, which had the support of France, to draw Austria closer to herself.

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<sup>6</sup> This enclosure is in Italian in the original.

<sup>7</sup> The words "*mise à point*" are French in the original.

## No. 6

2067/449252

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, March 6, 1936—6:35 p.m.

No. 33

II M 854.

With reference to your telegram No. 28 of February 29.<sup>1</sup>

You should inform the British Government that the Reich Government are prepared, even in the event of a tripartite treaty only being concluded between Britain, the USA and France, to negotiate about a special agreement with Britain, provided that a similar special agreement is concluded with the USSR and that Germany is insured by a safe-guarding clause<sup>2</sup> against the danger of non-observance of naval limitations by non-signatory States. You should at the same time inform the British Government that the Reich Government have taken note of the obligation which the British side has assumed not to proceed to the general conclusion of a naval treaty without German participation (see telegram No. 25 of February 26).<sup>3</sup>

RIBBENTROP

NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 601.

<sup>2</sup> The words "safe-guarding clause" are in English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 589.

## No. 7

6710/E506219-21

*Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 6, 1936—8:00 p.m.<sup>2</sup>

II R 271 [Ang.] III

[RM 178 Ang. III]<sup>3</sup>

To be deciphered and filed by the Head of Mission personally.

1) At noon (Central European Time) on Saturday<sup>4</sup> the Führer will proclaim before the Reichstag, with reference to the violation of Locarno by the Franco-Russian alliance, the restoration of German

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all diplomatic missions, except the addressees of documents Nos. 3 and 4, and the consular authorities in Geneva, Montreal and Sydney.

<sup>2</sup> The time of despatch is taken from the accompanying list of addressees (6710/E506222-24). The document itself is marked "Cipher Office!! To be despatched at 7 p.m. on Mar. 6."

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 3, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Mar. 7.

sovereignty in the demilitarized zone. The restoration of sovereignty will be signalized that same day by sending small contingents of the Wehrmacht into the zone.

2) The Locarno Powers will be notified of the German action on Saturday morning by a Memorandum. The reasons for the action will be publicly explained in the Führer's speech to the Reichstag.

3) Until the arrival of the first press or wireless reports on the substance of the Führer's speech the matter is to be kept strictly secret.

4) From that moment on you should hold language in accordance with the following points of view:

That Locarno has been violated by the new Pact, the ratification of which by the French Parliament is now beyond doubt, is for us a matter of indisputable fact. This has repeatedly been pointed out to the Locarno Powers since May of last year. Compare, in this connection, DNB No. 239 of February 21,<sup>5</sup> in which Herriot's assertions to the contrary in the French Parliament are refuted. By this alliance, which is directed exclusively against Germany, France has destroyed the foundations of Locarno both legally and politically. As a result, the condition on which Locarno was to be respected, as announced in the Führer's speech of May 21 of last year, no longer obtains. In order to combat a real deterioration in Germany's military-political situation, which has been increased by an alliance, parallel in form, between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, the Reich Government are forced to exploit the possibilities for defence in the demilitarized zone also. The creation of a *fait accompli* without previous negotiation was necessary because, in view of all our experiences in recent years, we could have expected no results from negotiations with France. The purely defensive character of the German action is, however, clearly apparent from the Führer's new offer of a treaty, which retains and further amplifies all the essential principles of Locarno, except for the unilateral demilitarization provisions, and also from the declaration of our readiness to return to the League of Nations.

5) From the moment mentioned above you should make use of all opportunities of influencing the press at your end in our favour.<sup>6</sup>

V. NEURATH

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<sup>5</sup> Not reprinted (M125/M004675).

<sup>6</sup> Copies of the Memorandum (see document No. 3, enclosure) were transmitted to the addressees of this telegram under despatch RM 190 [subsequently changed to II R 276a] of Mar. 7 (6710/E506256), for information and guidance on language to be held. The Legations in Budapest, Belgrade, Sofia and Berne were instructed to communicate a copy of the Memorandum to the Governments there, for their information.



## No. 8

7846/E569406-08

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 33 of March 6, 1936.

LONDON, March 6, 1936.

Received March 7—8:50 a.m.

II R 276.

This morning Eden sent to ask me to call on him this afternoon. After consulting with Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff by telephone<sup>1</sup> I sent the reply that, on the basis of information from Berlin,<sup>2</sup> I was expecting important instructions and would therefore request that the conversation be postponed until tomorrow, Saturday, morning. Eden's reply was that he would be at my disposal tomorrow too, but that he urgently wished to see me this afternoon as well.

I have therefore just called on the Foreign Secretary. He began by expressing profound satisfaction at our cooperative attitude over the question of signing a bilateral German-British naval agreement on qualitative limitation,<sup>3</sup> and then said he hoped that, on the basis of our negotiations with Lord Monsell<sup>4</sup> and Sir Ernle Chatfield<sup>5</sup> the day before yesterday,<sup>6</sup> a final agreement on a German-British settlement [*Abschluss*] would be reached.

The Foreign Secretary then recalled my conversation with him on February 27,<sup>7</sup> when, in reply to my question about possible British plans for bringing about German-British-French cooperation, he had intimated that he would discuss the subject with me again when he had contacted Flandin in Geneva.<sup>8</sup> He then went on to say that now as previously he was greatly in favour of the idea of such tripartite cooperation. Britain wished to have relations of confidence with Germany, such as, it was hoped, would now once again be expressed by the signing of the above-mentioned naval agreement. But she also wished to maintain her friendly relations with France and she therefore lived in hopes of seeing relations of confidence established between Germany and France also.

In considering how the realization of such a tripartite understanding could in practice be brought nearer, he returned to the Air Pact<sup>9</sup>

<sup>1</sup> No record of this telephone conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 589, 596 and 601.

<sup>4</sup> Viscount Monsell, First Lord of the Admiralty.

<sup>5</sup> Admiral of the Fleet Sir Ernle Chatfield, First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

<sup>6</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 605.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 594.

<sup>8</sup> Eden and Flandin attended the fifth session, held Mar. 2-4, of the Committee of Eighteen (see also documents Nos. 1 and 2).

<sup>9</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 68, 106 and *passim*.

as the proper [*gegebene*] first stage for a policy of understanding of the kind contemplated. Flandin, too, had described the Air Pact to him as the first goal worth striving for. It was, certainly, also desired that Germany should return to the League of Nations, but it was plain to him that this could not for the moment be expected of the Reich Government, for which reason he wanted to refrain from making any suggestions in this direction.

Where the Air Pact itself was concerned he appreciated that, for the familiar reasons, it would not be possible at present to enlist Germany in favour of a limitation of air forces. But this did not exclude attempts to bring about an Air Pact, perhaps even without limitation for the time being. Italy's participation would of course be highly desirable. Neither was this perhaps impossible now that Italy had actively participated in the negotiations on the general naval agreement and had only at the end made difficulties about signing.<sup>10</sup> However, should Italy not be ready to take part in negotiations about a western Air Pact, it would still be possible to consider the provisional conclusion of an air agreement between Germany, Britain, France and Belgium.

For this reason he was requesting the Reich Government, through me, to adopt a favourable attitude to the Air Pact idea. In this connection it appeared to him that the negotiations on an air agreement, which were to be conducted through diplomatic channels, would probably turn on the following five points:

(1) Which States should be guarantors in the Air Pact and which States should enjoy the benefit of a guarantee?

(2) Under what circumstances will the guarantee obligations become operative?

(3) Prohibition, in principle, of bombing.

(4) Extension of the guarantee obligation to aerial attacks on naval and merchant vessels.

(5) The possible content of any bilateral agreements.

With reference to point (5) the Foreign Secretary said that naturally he knew that we were against allowing supplementary bilateral agreements. He could only repeat his assurance that the British Government rejected bilateral agreements which might upset the balance amongst the parties to the treaty. On the other hand we knew how far the French Government had committed themselves to the idea of bilateral agreements. In view of this he had in mind only such "bilateral agreements"<sup>11</sup> as would be concluded *openly* between the individual parties to the treaty; these must contain no secret clauses and the provisions in each of them must be substantially identical with the corresponding provisions in each of the others.

<sup>10</sup> See *ibid.*, documents Nos. 589 and 600.

<sup>11</sup> In English in the original.

The Foreign Secretary said that the speedy commencement of negotiations on this basis would doubtless be conducive to the creation of an atmosphere of greater confidence in Western Europe.

Apart from the appropriate interjections and counter-arguments, I confined myself mainly to listening to Eden's remarks.

In conclusion, I asked the Foreign Secretary to receive me tomorrow at 11 a.m. so that I might carry out the instructions I was expecting. In this connection Eden asked me whether there was any truth in the newspaper reports that the Führer and Chancellor intended shortly to make an important political statement in the Reichstag. I replied that I had no information on this.<sup>12</sup>

HOESCH

<sup>12</sup> For Eden's account of this conversation see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 57 (see also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 24, footnote 1).

## No. 9

3598/797794-97

### *Minutes of the Conference of Ministers held on Friday, March 6, 1936 at 9:15 p.m.*

[BERLIN,] March 6, 1936.

Rk. 3251.

3252.

3253.

#### *Present:*

The Führer and Chancellor	Adolf Hitler
The Führer's Deputy	Reich Minister Hess
The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs	Freiherr von Neurath
The Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior	Dr. Frick
The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht	von Blomberg
The Reich Finance Minister	Count Schwerin von Krosigk
The acting Reich and Prussian Minister of Economics	Dr. Schacht
The Reich and Prussian Minister of Labour	Seldte
The Reich Minister of Justice	Dr. Gürtner
The Reich Minister of Posts and Communications	Freiherr von Eltz-Rübenach

The Reich Minister for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda	Dr. Goebbels
The Reich Minister for Air, and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe, Prussian Minister President	Göring
The Reich and Prussian Minister of Science, Education and Public Instruction	Rust
The Reich and Prussian Minister for Church Affairs	Kerrl
Reich Minister without Portfolio	Dr. Frank
The Prussian Finance Minister	Dr. Popitz
The President of the Reichsbank	Dr. Schacht (see above)
The State Secretary and Head of the Reich Chancellery	Dr. Lammers
State Secretary and Head of the Presidential Chancellery	Dr. Meissner
The Press Chief	State Secretary Funk
In charge of the Minutes:	State Secretary Dr. Lammers

Also present: State Secretary Pfundner (Reich Finance Ministry).

The Führer explained at length that the Pact between France and the Soviet Union, which the French Chamber had already approved, constituted a clear breach of the Locarno Treaty. He had therefore decided to reoccupy the demilitarized Rhineland with German troops. All preparations for this had been made; some of the German troops were already on the march. He had summoned the Reichstag for tomorrow—Saturday—and, for the benefit of the German people and of other countries, he would set forth to it in detail the reasons for his action. At the same time he would dissolve the Reichstag with effect from March 28, 1936, and would have new elections held on March 29, which would give the German people the opportunity of endorsing his policy and the measures he had taken. Tomorrow, Saturday, the accredited diplomatic representatives in Berlin of the Powers signatories to the Locarno Treaty would have communicated to them the Memorandum<sup>1</sup> which he had prepared.

The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs then read out the attached Memorandum.<sup>1</sup> This Memorandum, together with the Führer's other measures and proposals, was unanimously approved by the Reich Cabinet.

<sup>1</sup> Not reprinted (3598/797798-806; this is a copy of the final version of the Memorandum, identical with that printed as the enclosure to document No. 3.



The Reich Cabinet also approved the attached draft<sup>2</sup> of a law on persons entitled to vote in elections to the Reichstag.

The meeting ended at 10:15 p.m.

DR. LAMMERS

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (3598/797807). For the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. I, p. 133.

## No. 10

2067/449254-55

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.  
e.o. II M 862 g.

Captain Wassner transmitted the following at 11:10 p.m. yesterday:

"The telegram<sup>2</sup> which has just arrived today provides the answer to the telegram of February 29.<sup>3</sup> In the meantime you should have received our report of March 4,<sup>4</sup> which contains information on the negotiations which have been held meanwhile. It is, for certain special reasons, desirable that a reply to this latter report should be available in London by 10 a.m. tomorrow, your time. The most important matter is a decision on the following questions:

1) Whether, in view of the 'safe-guarding clause' which has been communicated<sup>5</sup> and which is available at your end, German signature can take place before the conclusion of an Anglo-Russian treaty on the condition that the latter takes place very soon.

2) What the attitude of the German Government is to the formula<sup>6</sup> on ships' age limits handed over by the British."

On the Führer and Chancellor's instructions, and after consulting with Admiral Raeder, Captain Wassner has been informed as follows, *via* Ambassador von Ribbentrop:

1) In view of the proposed "safe-guarding clause", Germany is prepared to negotiate and sign a treaty with Britain. The entry into force of this treaty must however remain dependent on the conclusion of a similar treaty between Britain and the Soviet Union.

2) Germany accepts the formula proposed by Britain concerning the age of German battleships.

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<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was evidently drafted by Kamphoevener; it bears a marginal note in his handwriting circulating it to Büro R.M., the State Secretary, the Director and the Deputy Director.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 6.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 601.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 605.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, enclosure 2. The words "safe-guarding clause" are in English in the original.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, enclosure 1.

3) Germany assumes that the other German demands,<sup>7</sup> which have been set down in writing, may now be taken to have been accepted by Britain, also in respect of the date of entry into force of the treaty as being January 1, 1937.

4) Germany agrees to a treaty duration of six years.

5) Germany agrees to the conclusion of the treaty in the form of an exchange of Notes.

6) Germany now looks forward to receiving a British treaty draft.

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<sup>7</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 585.

## No. 11

4619/E198264

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.

RM 191.

This morning at 10:15, I received the Italian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> and gave him a copy of the Reich Government's Memorandum,<sup>2</sup> in which the restoration of full sovereignty in the demilitarized zone is announced and justified.

I informed the Ambassador that, should she in fact return to the League of Nations, Germany would not take part in the sanctions against Italy which have so far been resolved upon by the League of Nations by reason of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict.

The Ambassador accepted my statements without making any special remarks.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

## No. 12

4619/E198267-68

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.

RM 193.

This morning at 10:15, [sic] I received the British Ambassador<sup>1</sup> and gave him a copy of the Reich Government's Memorandum,<sup>2</sup> in which the restoration of full sovereignty in the demilitarized zone is announced and justified.

The Ambassador showed himself to be most seriously impressed,

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Eric Phipps.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

especially by the fact, which I confirmed when he asked about it, that small detachments of troops had marched into the previously demilitarized zone. He described the situation thus created as considerably more serious than that which had arisen at the time when universal military service had been reintroduced.<sup>3</sup> To this I replied that his statement in itself did not surprise me, but that I must point out to him that we had already a year ago drawn the British Government's attention to our views on the incompatibility of the Locarno Treaty with the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance.<sup>4</sup>

The Ambassador expressed doubts as to whether, after this unilateral denunciation of a Treaty which even the Führer and Chancellor had described as having been signed of our own free will,<sup>5</sup> Germany's good faith as regards treaties in general could still be assumed, to which I replied quite definitely that we must describe the Treaty as no longer existing in its present form precisely because a situation had been created, by the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance, which could no longer be reconciled with the provisions of the Locarno Treaty.

FRHR. v. NEURATH

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<sup>3</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 532 and 538.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 107 and enclosure thereto.

<sup>5</sup> In Hitler's speech of May 21, 1935; see vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

## No. 13

4619/E198265-66

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.

RM 192.

This morning at 10:30 I received the French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> and gave him a copy of the Reich Government's Memorandum,<sup>2</sup> in which the restoration of full sovereignty in the demilitarized zone is announced and justified.

The French Ambassador entered a solemn protest against the unilateral violation of the Versailles Treaty and of the Locarno Agreements. Thereupon I informed him that the German Government had, by their statement in May of the previous year,<sup>3</sup> already protested against the unilateral violation of the Locarno Treaty which France had undertaken by concluding the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance. The Ambassador declared that he must reserve for his Government the right to take any further decisions. He asked whether

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<sup>1</sup> André François-Poncet.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 107 and enclosure thereto.

it was true that units of the Wehrmacht would move into the demilitarized zone today. I confirmed this and told him that small contingents of troops would march in, and that they were merely intended to signalize the restoration of Germany's full sovereignty over this territory.

The Ambassador then asked whether the German statements made at the end of the Memorandum were intended as an answer to the questions which he had put at a recent audience with the Führer and Chancellor,<sup>4</sup> when he had requested more precise details on our wishes for a *rapprochement* between the two countries. I replied that our observations at the end of the Memorandum were not intended as an answer to his questions, but that they constituted the basis which we were proposing for the discussions and the *rapprochement* which we desired.<sup>5</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On Mar. 2; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 604.

<sup>5</sup> In memorandum RM 195 of the same date (4619/E198270-71) Counsellor Kotze noted that Arnal, Counsellor of the French Embassy, had repeated the same enquiry to him by telephone. After consultation with the Foreign Minister, he had replied that the German Memorandum was not intended as a reply but as an independent declaration; the answer to François-Poncet's previous questions could easily be ascertained from Hitler's speech of Mar. 7 [see Editors' Note below]. In reply to another question by Arnal, Kotze confirmed that no further answer was to be expected.

<sup>6</sup> In memoranda RM 194 (4619/E198269) and II R 304 (6710/E506343), both of Mar. 7, Neurath and Dieckhoff, respectively, recorded having communicated the German Memorandum on the reoccupation of the Rhineland to the Belgian and American Chargés d'Affaires.

[EDITORS' NOTE: At noon on March 7, 1936, Hitler addressed the Reichstag, announcing the decision to remilitarize the Rhineland and reading out the text of the German Memorandum (see document No. 3, enclosure). Extracts from this speech are printed in *The Speeches of Adolf Hitler, April 1922–August 1939*, edited by Norman H. Baynes (London, 1942) (hereinafter cited as Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*), vol. II, pp. 1271–1302.]

## No. 14

6710/E506271-72

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 6 of March 7

BRUSSELS, March 7, 1936—1:15 p.m.

Received March 7—4:30 p.m.

II R 284.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 II of March 5,<sup>1</sup> and to your telegram No. 13 of March 6.<sup>2</sup>

At ten o'clock (Western European Time) I communicated the

<sup>1</sup> This should read RM 178 I of Mar. 5 (document No. 3).

<sup>2</sup> The number under which the second telegram cited in document No. 3, footnote 14, was transmitted to Brussels.



Memorandum to Minister President van Zeeland (who received me in the presence of van Langenhove, the Secretary General) and explained it in detail, making use of the arguments contained in your despatch referred to above. In view of the situation here, I particularly emphasized the French responsibility for our action as well as the value of our positive proposals, which were designed to safeguard peace. In spite of this, van Zeeland and van Langenhove were unable to conceal the fact that our statements had made a grave impression on them. They remained quite silent for some time, until Minister President van Zeeland replied that our step and the reasons for it had come so unexpectedly and found him so unprepared that he was unable to make any binding statement. He then asked van Langenhove to state his views. The latter observed that the Belgian Government had been informed in detail by me of the German attitude to the Franco-Russian Pact and its relationship with Locarno, but that they had never concealed from us that they, in accordance with the views of other Powers, could not accept our reasoning.<sup>3</sup> But even if Germany assumed that a treaty violation by one party to a multilateral treaty had occurred, a remedy must first be sought by other means. Here Langenhove was alluding to an appeal to the International Court of Arbitration, to which I replied with the argument set forth in your despatch (point 5), drawing attention to the political aspect of the matter. I emphasized especially and in detail the opinion, which was also held among the Belgian public, that France, by the Franco-Russian Treaty and by the extension of the French pact system, which had almost become a mania, had acted, both legally and politically, in contradiction to her earlier obligations. Langenhove thereupon declared that nevertheless a treaty violation by one party should not lead to a complete breach of the treaty by one of the other parties; if one were to accept this principle one would end up with the collapse (*bouleversement*) of the foundations of international law. Moreover, our Memorandum contained no reproach of any sort against Belgium; nevertheless, she was harder hit by our step than any other signatory Power, since, as we knew, the Locarno Pact was the most important corner stone of Belgian security. In reply to this I once more described our offer of new agreements on the establishment of a system safeguarding European peace and made it clear that if our proposals were accepted Belgian security would be strengthened.

The Minister President reserved a definitive statement of views by the Belgian Government until the beginning of next week.<sup>4</sup>

BRÄUER

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 213.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes on another copy of this document (7562/E542224-25): (i) "[For the R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath], Mar. 7." (ii) "The F[ührer] is informed. M[eerwald], Mar. 10."

## No. 15

6710/E506263-69

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 14 of March 7

PRAGUE, March 7, 1936—2:40 p.m.

Received March 7—4:00 p.m.

II R 282.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5,<sup>1</sup> and to your telegram No. 14 of March 6.<sup>2</sup>

This morning I personally gave Foreign Minister Krofta the Memorandum, which had been altered as instructed, and made use of the arguments in the despatch, emphasizing particularly the defensive nature of the measures taken as well as the desire, expressed in the Führer's proposals, to pacify Europe; I also pointed out the advantages which might result from this for Czechoslovakia.

The Foreign Minister replied that he must of course reserve the right to study the matter and could only give his own personal first impression. This impression was definitely favourable with regard to the positive proposals, which were a pleasant surprise and would also have a good effect on the British Government. But he could not endorse our argument that, through her Russian Pact, France had invalidated Locarno. He asked himself with anxiety whether France would permit herself to be confronted with a *fait accompli* by us once again. He regarded the contents of our communication as ninety per cent favourable and ten per cent unfavourable, and he only hoped that the positive part might not fail because of this ten per cent. He could, however, already assure me that his Government would exert all their influence with the Western Powers in order to make possible the realization of our proposals.

I also requested him to try and see that discussions in the press were calm in tone and that our relations were not strained by excited comment. This he promised to do.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The number under which the first telegram cited in document No. 3, footnote 14, was transmitted to Prague.

## No. 16

6710/E506270

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 3 of March 7

THE HAGUE, March 7, 1936—2:40 p.m.

Received March 7—4:10 p.m.

II R 283.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5.<sup>1</sup>

This morning I communicated the Memorandum to Jonkheer Snouck,<sup>2</sup> the deputy of the Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> who is on holiday, and added observations in accordance with your despatch referred to above. The Secretary General said that he would bring the Memorandum to the attention of the Netherlands Government; the German offer to include the Netherlands in the proposed new treaty system would be studied with the greatest interest. The declaration of Germany's readiness to return to the League of Nations, without insisting on a previous solution of the colonial question, as well as the question of separating the Covenant of the League of Nations from its Versailles setting, would undoubtedly be appreciated by the Netherlands Government.

At the end of the conversation, the Secretary General gave it as his personal opinion that the denunciation of the Locarno Treaty did not come as a surprise to him, but he believed that this step, which, only two years ago, would have resulted in war, would now be quietly accepted.<sup>4</sup>

BOLTZE

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> Jonkheer A. M. Snouck Hurgronje, Secretary General of the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Jonkheer A. C. D. de Graeff.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes on another copy of this telegram (7562/E542223): (i) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath]." (ii) "The Führer is informed. M[eerwal]d, Mar. 10."

## No. 17

6710/E506273-74

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PARIS, March 7, 1936—[4:15 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

No. 127 of March 7

Received March 7—6:20 p.m.

II R 285.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5.<sup>2</sup>

As the Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> let me know yesterday that he would not be in Paris today, I carried out the *démarche* this morning, as instructed,

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<sup>1</sup> The time of despatch is taken from the draft in the files of the German Embassy in Paris (M208/M006625-26).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3.

<sup>3</sup> Pierre-Etienne Flandin.

with Léger.<sup>4</sup> As was to have been foreseen from the reports in this morning's press, the conversation gave me the impression that the French Government were prepared for an important German statement concerning the demilitarized zone.

I communicated the Memorandum, and, at Léger's request, gave an oral word-for-word translation, as well as the prescribed short explanation of the main points. In reply to a question by Léger, I specially went into detail about our return to the League of Nations.

Léger then mentioned the French Ambassador's most recent audience with the Führer and Chancellor on March 2.<sup>5</sup> The French Government had not regarded the Führer's friendly statements on German-French relations in the interview with the *Paris Midi*<sup>6</sup> as a move directed against the Franco-Soviet Treaty, but had considered them to be sincere. They had, accordingly, caused the Ambassador to enquire of the Führer as to what concrete proposals the Führer could make, and, when the Führer replied that he must first reflect fully upon the matter, they had waited, without informing the public of the conversation. He now wished to ask me what relation, in the view of the German Government, did the present declaration bear to the Führer's promise to François-Poncet. The question seemed to him to be an important one, since the French public would be inclined to discern a grave discrepancy between the Führer's statements in the interview and the present action, and to conclude from it that the former had not been sincere. When Léger spoke of possible doubts on the part of the French public as to the sincerity of the statements made at the interview, I interrupted him and pointed out that, as the French Government themselves had made clear through their Ambassador, the statements neither could nor should be doubted. For the rest I promised, upon Léger's repeatedly requesting an answer to the question, which was not dealt with in my instructions, that I would obtain instructions.

Léger refrained from further statements and questions.

I request instructions by telegram.<sup>7</sup>

FORSTER<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Alexis Léger, Secretary General of the French Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 604.

<sup>6</sup> An interview which Hitler gave to Bertrand de Jouvenel was published in *Paris Midi* on Feb. 28, 1936.

<sup>7</sup> See below, document No. 24.

<sup>8</sup> Marginal notes on another copy of this document (7562/E542221-22): (i) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath], Mar. 7." (ii) "I have already had Poncet informed that the answer to this question is to be gathered from the Führer's speech. v. N[eurath]." (iii) "The Führer is informed. M[eerwald], Mar. 10."



## No. 18

6710/E506294-98

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 25 of March 7

ROME, March 7, 1936—5:30 p.m.

Received March 7—8:15 p.m.

II R 287.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5.<sup>1</sup>

This morning I went with Suvich, whom I had informed of the state of affairs shortly before, to see Mussolini before the meeting of the Council of Ministers, which was fixed for ten o'clock, and informed him of our decision and set forth the main arguments contained in the despatch and in the Memorandum. Mussolini was very much taken aback by my communication. He said that it was of such importance that it must be most carefully examined. Meanwhile he was forced to say<sup>2</sup> that we had gone much too far. Although I had realized beforehand what effect our communication would have on Mussolini and why, I nevertheless asked him whether he thought that our reoccupation of the demilitarized zone went too far? Mussolini replied that he had meant precisely the opposite. He was of the opinion that there was no comparison between that which we were demanding or taking and that which we were offering. He surmised that the British and French would make no answer to our declaration regarding the restoration of sovereignty in the demilitarized zone and the quashing of Locarno other than the usual loud protests. On the other hand Britain and France would see this as an opportunity of harnessing us once again to their old system. The League of Nations, which was being given a new stability by the policy announced by Germany, was and remained an Anglo-Franco-Soviet cooperative society; moreover, a twenty-five-year non-aggression pact would tie us down politically to an extent to which, in his personal opinion, a State should not commit itself for a quarter of a century. This declaration of ours was a turning-point in European politics. The British and French would, of course, not be satisfied with our offers, which, as had already been said, went quite far enough, but would make them a basis for further demands, especially in the sphere of disarmament as well as with respect to Austria and the German position in the Danubian region. He regarded the offer of a non-aggression pact to Czechoslovakia as very risky. In making this offer we would be putting ourselves in an entirely new position with regard to the Danubian question. Where Italy was concerned, we must

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> The draft in the files of the Rome Embassy (M281/M011521-27) here reads: "... that his first impression was quite definitely that ..."

be aware that our announcement, to which we had attached no conditions, that we wished to return to the League of Nations, was tantamount to striking her weapon out of Italy's hand. It was clear that she could now no longer answer the Geneva appeal in the negative<sup>3</sup> (presumably the text of the reply had already been drawn up, and was to be submitted to the Council of Ministers which was just about to sit), and that Italy's chief argument in her political struggle, namely, the threat of withdrawal from the League of Nations, had lost all its value. Thus, in this connection too, our step meant that an entirely new situation had been created. Suvich, who had told me beforehand that he had reckoned with every possibility other than the announcement of our return to the League of Nations, and that only a few days ago he had reassured Mussolini in this connection in all good faith, asked whether he was right in interpreting my statements to mean that we made equality of colonial rights a condition. I replied that this was certainly not the case, but that I must once more emphasize that all that was involved was a statement of the German readiness [to return to the League of Nations] within the framework of our proposals as a whole. The return itself, therefore, would certainly take some time. As for the non-aggression pacts, both those in the West and that with Czechoslovakia, I could not take them very tragically, since, as was known, non-aggression *per se* was the underlying principle of numerous European agreements to which Italy was also a party. Mussolini had also said that, on this basis, much more still would be demanded of us, to which our reply must be that with this offer we had in truth gone far enough and that we would not allow ourselves to be pushed any further. That we had gone thus far was due to the Führer's wishing to prove absolutely and to the utmost our peaceful intentions. Mussolini replied that he was indeed, as he had said, of the opinion that we had gone very far, perhaps too far; this would not, however, deter the other side from extorting more. I then, after having first emphasized particularly, as instructed, that our policy in the Abyssinian question would not change in any way, turned to Mussolini's statements about Italy. I now added that we could throw in our gradually increasing weight on Italy's side, even in the League of Nations if necessary. On this Mussolini remarked that the Abyssinian question would probably be settled in five or six months' time, so that this possibility would probably hardly be relevant by then. For practical purposes, at any rate, the fact that he would no longer be able to maintain the position which he had so far held in the present struggle

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<sup>3</sup> For the appeal by the Committee of Thirteen see document No. 1, footnote 1; in telegram No. 24 of Mar. 6 (8015/E576462) Hassell had reported information from a reliable source that Italy's reply would be that negotiations could not be begun whilst sanctions were in force and at a time when their extension was threatened, and that Italy could not consider suspending military operations.

was of decisive importance. In reply to this I pointed out that for Italy our action would have *de facto* the effect of a diversionary offensive, since all . . . (group mutilated)<sup>4</sup> would be concentrated on our action. Mussolini, who, during the whole conversation, made it more and more clear that he regarded our communication as a heavy blow, finally repeated that he would think the whole problem over so as to consider it from all angles; thereupon he joined the Council of Ministers.

To sum up it may be said that the German action, as far as Locarno and the demilitarized zone are concerned, evoked neither disquiet nor objections on Mussolini's part. On the other hand, the idea of a return to the League of Nations, which is, as compared with the substance of my conversations in Munich and Berlin,<sup>5</sup> an entirely new one, has had an almost shattering effect on Mussolini, who clearly regards it as a stab in the back in view of his present difficult position. The offer to Czechoslovakia made an equally strong impression on him. It may be assumed that today's announcement to Mussolini will have a very pronounced effect both on the nature of Italy's reply to the Geneva appeal and on the impending tripartite meeting Mussolini-Gömbös-Schuschnigg.<sup>6</sup>

In view of the attitude here which I have described, and which is certain to be radically different from that obtaining in London and Paris, it might perhaps be possible to provide me with arguments other than those of which use has already been made, to justify our having announced our readiness to return to the League of Nations just at this moment.<sup>7</sup>

HASSELL

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<sup>4</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 2 above) here reads: "... since all attention would be ..."

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to Hassell's conversations with Hitler of Jan. 17, Feb. 14 and Feb. 19; see vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 506, 564 and 575.

<sup>6</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 569, footnote 2 and 597, and this volume, documents Nos. 165, 204 and 226.

<sup>7</sup> Counsellor of Embassy von Plessen recorded Hassell's conversation with Mussolini, at which he was present, in a memorandum of Mar. 7 (3175/682628-30), the last paragraph of which reads: "My overall impression is that Mussolini, without becoming directly abusive, could not have taken the communication made to him in a worse manner, that he considers the measures envisaged by us to be folly and that he regards them as a betrayal of Italy."

## No. 19

6710/E506304

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 8 of March 7

WARSAW, March 7, 1936—7:45 p.m.

Received March 7—9:25 p.m.

II R 288.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5<sup>1</sup> and your telegram No. 12 of March 6.<sup>2</sup>

This morning I communicated the Memorandum in question to German Minister Beck and explained it as instructed.

M. Beck adopted an attitude of reserve and stated that he could not yet say anything on the grave questions raised in the Memorandum. He was, however, very grateful for the information and would welcome it if he could have further opportunities for an exchange of views during the diplomatic discussions which were to be expected in the next few days. He hoped that no major complications would arise, but he was aware that for France the demilitarized zone was a very serious matter.

It was noticeable that in this connection M. Beck came to speak of German-Polish relations, and that with the remark that so far he had observed no indications of a change in our attitude to Poland, and that he assumed that German-Polish relations would continue to be determined by the agreements of January 1934.<sup>3</sup> I replied by referring to the clear statement made here by Minister President Göring in the Führer's name, concerning our unconditional adherence to a policy of understanding.<sup>4</sup> At the close of the conversation the Foreign Minister remarked that he feared that the fixing of the duration of the non-aggression pact at twenty-five years would give rise to comparisons, among the public here, with the ten years' duration of the German-Polish Treaty and consequently to further mistrustful criticism. I gained the impression from the conversation that a serious exchange of views on the expected abolition of the demilitarized zone had already taken place between Paris and Warsaw; this has, moreover, been confirmed to me by another quarter.<sup>5</sup>

MOLTKE<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 4.

<sup>2</sup> The number under which the second telegram cited in document No. 3, footnote 14, was transmitted to Warsaw.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 591.

<sup>5</sup> See also Comte Jean Szembek: *Journal 1933-1939* (Paris, 1952) (hereinafter cited as Szembek: *Journal*), pp. 166-168.

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 9 of Mar. 7 (6710/E506318), Moltke reported on the reactions of the Polish Foreign Ministry.



## No. 20

6710/E506313-15

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 33 of March 7

ANKARA, March 7, 1936—8:45 p.m.

Received March 8—12:45 a.m.

II R 291.

Numan Menemencioglu, to whom I had sent word that I would like to see him, has just been to see me to obtain more detailed information on the Führer's speech,<sup>1</sup> which has in the meanwhile reached this country by radio and teleprinter. I informed him of the German action announced in telegram No. 12<sup>2</sup> and gave him a detailed explanation of the point of view which had been decisive both for this action and for the offer of a new treaty. When questioned as to how this might affect Turkey, he said he thought that Turkey would not be directly affected by the German action; it would doubtless meet with understanding here in view of Turkey's interests, which were similar, though not at present nearly as acute or important geopolitically. The most important thing for Turkey was, however, the maintenance of world peace, to which the dissolution of the Locarno Treaty constituted a threat, in any case at first sight. From the German point of view the moment had been cleverly chosen. What exactly the results would be was admittedly a subject for speculation. France would undoubtedly react most vehemently, since the present German step was more serious and more dangerous for her than last year's denunciation of the military clause of the Treaty of Versailles, which had in fact been no more than a legalization of the present and future rearmament of Germany. Now, however, in consequence of the creation of a *fait accompli* in the demilitarized zone, France's militaro-political position had been radically altered and the French people's sense of security, too, had been diminished. One must definitely count on an increased tendency in the Senate to favour the Franco-Russian Pact. That there would be changes in the French parties' attitude to Germany was also certain, although nothing could yet be said in this connection; presumably the coming elections in France would now be held on the platform of foreign policy. For the moment the French Government would seek support from Britain and incite her to harsh retaliation. If this failed, France would turn resolutely to Italy and make use of the German danger with regard to Austria as a lever.

For the rest, as far as Italy was concerned, she was just now standing

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 7, which was despatched to Ankara under this number.

at the crossroads on account of her reply to the appeal made by the Committee of Thirteen,<sup>3</sup> and could choose between several alternatives. Germany's return to the League of Nations might perhaps make an impression on Britain because it would fulfil a wish which had repeatedly been expressed there. But on the other hand it would be argued that Germany's return offered no guarantee, because even as a member of the League she might one day resort to force, just as Italy had done and just as Germany was even now acting unilaterally (an argument which I refuted emphatically and, it seemed, successfully). Russia would behave most violently of all—although probably in word rather than in deed—and she would support every step taken to counter Germany's action.

Numan repeated that these were only tentative ideas and surmises, one must first await the views of the other Locarno Powers; but he would, in any case, inform Tewfik Rüşti in Istanbul by telephone. When I said we expected the Turkish press to show understanding for the German action, he replied that it would not take sides against Germany but would adopt an attitude of wait and see. The extent to which this promise is kept depends, in my opinion, on what influence is exerted by Britain and Russia. The Führer's speech appears today in the *Türkische Post*, but will not appear in the Turkish papers till tomorrow morning.

KELLER

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 1, footnote 1.

## No. 21

6710/E506307-10

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 35 of March 7

LONDON, March 7, 1936.  
Received March 8—10:30 a.m.  
II R 290.

With reference to your despatch RM 178 of March 5.<sup>1</sup>

I prefaced my today's *démarche* with the statement that, in the matter of the German-British agreement on the qualitative limitation of naval armaments, the Reich Government had accepted the proposal for a formula for classification according to age which Lord Monsell had communicated to me on March 4, and that they were also willing for the agreement to be concluded without Italian participation.<sup>2</sup> They

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 3.

<sup>2</sup> For the British proposal see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 605; for the German acceptance see this volume, document No. 10.

were also prepared, in view of the "Safeguarding Clause"<sup>3</sup> proposed by Britain, to conclude the treaty ahead of Russia, provided, however, that before the treaty finally came into force a similar agreement had come into being between Britain and Russia. Finally, I remarked that [we] would consider an exchange of Notes to constitute an agreement. Thus, I explained, the way would be open for the German-British agreement to come into being. (The Naval Attaché will discuss further details with Craigie on Monday.<sup>4</sup>)

Eden expressed great satisfaction and gratitude for our willingness to cooperate.

I then communicated our Memorandum to Eden and read out to him, but did not give him, the text of an English translation which had been prepared here. I then gave an oral explanation in the sense of the despatch referred to above. In particular, I drew his attention to the great importance attaching to our readiness to return to the League of Nations, and emphasized that the Führer and Chancellor had taken this difficult decision not least in view of the close connection between British policy and the League of Nations. I further pointed out that the peace system which we were offering did not in fact constitute an attack on, but, on the contrary, an extension of, the idea of securing peace in the West which underlay the Rhine Pact. I appealed to the Foreign Secretary to counteract any ill-considered outbursts on the part of the French and to show understanding for the fact that our offers, which went further than any offers from any other side had ever gone, provided an unprecedented opportunity of taking decisive action for the consolidation of Europe.

In his reply Eden described our Memorandum as a document which would have many consequences; he could not comment on it in detail until he had studied it carefully. He fully understood the importance of our declaration of willingness to return to the League of Nations. Nor did our other offers fail to make an impression on him. However, he stressed that the gravest objection arose from the fact that Germany had unilaterally repudiated a treaty which she had concluded of her own free will. The Führer and Chancellor, he said, had personally told him in Berlin that he acknowledged the Locarno Treaty as an agreement which Germany had concluded voluntarily, and to which she would accordingly adhere.<sup>5</sup> If the Reich Government were now to repudiate this Treaty, this would create a most deplorable impression everywhere.

I then explained that *we* had not repudiated Locarno, but that on the

<sup>3</sup> The words "Safeguarding Clause" are in English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> For Wassner's report on his discussion with Craigie see document No. 46.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to Eden's conversation with Hitler in Berlin on Feb. 20, 1934; see vol. II of this Series, document No. 271, and *Documents on British Foreign Policy 1919-1939* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, *in progress*) (hereinafter cited as *British Documents*), Second Series, vol. VI, No. 304, enclosure 2.

contrary France, by concluding her alliance with Russia, had destroyed the legal and spiritual foundations of Locarno. In proof of this I once more read out Article 1 of the Protocol accompanying the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance, in which the possibility of arbitrarily setting aside the League of Nations is laid down.

Eden did not defend this clause, but only remarked that he was aware of our objections to the Franco-Soviet Alliance. If, he continued, we believed that this Alliance was incompatible with Locarno, there had been open to us the course, provided for in the Locarno Treaties, of appealing to a court of arbitration. We were not, however, justified in a unilateral denunciation.

In answer to this I emphasized that, in making our objections, we were not concerned with the issue of the interpretation or scope of certain provisions under the Treaty, but with the fact that the Locarno Treaty as a whole had been destroyed, both legally and in spirit, by the Franco-Soviet Alliance and, therefore, nullified. At the end of the conversation I once more urgently appealed to Eden for the British Government, in their possible displeasure over the measures which Germany had taken in the full conviction that her cause was a just one, not to ignore the importance of the opportunity which now offered of building up, by shifting the Locarno idea from the former demilitarized zone to the German-French and German-Belgian frontiers, a peace system which, in its scope and its stability, would far surpass the original Locarno system.

The Foreign Secretary made no further comment on this, but only asked me to hold myself in readiness for further discussions with him in the next few days.<sup>6</sup>

Hoesch

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<sup>6</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 7 (7562/E542219-20) Dieckhoff recorded a telephone conversation at 5:45 p.m. with Hoesch, who communicated the substance of the document here printed. For Eden's account, see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 58.

## No. 22

147/78402-03

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.

The Polish Ambassador called on me today and, without giving me any opportunity of explaining the Locarno Memorandum,<sup>1</sup> began to make a complaint about yesterday's breaking off of negotiations between Reich Minister Schacht and State Secretary Sokolowski.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In another memorandum of the same date (147/78401) Bülow recorded that Lipski had received the German Memorandum (document No. 3, enclosure) without comment.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 62.



He said that all the Polish proposals had been rejected and in particular the proposal to guarantee future payments. When he, Lipski, had been negotiating with Herr Schacht about these future payments, he had always understood that payment would be made in foreign exchange. Even during the first negotiations with Sokolowski three days ago there had still been question of small cash payments. Yesterday Herr Schacht had refused all payment in foreign exchange and had only offered to take German private claims in Poland into account. The extent and value of these claims was, however, completely uncertain.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, to be offset against these claims there were large Polish private claims in Germany, for instance a considerable amount of property in houses. The main point in Sokolowski's instructions had been to ensure future payments. After negotiations had been broken off yesterday Sokolowski had departed, and this could not fail to make the worst possible impression in Warsaw, not least because Sokolowski was considered to be Poland's most able negotiator. Our attitude would be viewed as an unfriendly act in Warsaw; Poland could no longer maintain the transit traffic for nothing, i.e., without payment being made. Further Polish measures relating to the Corridor traffic would have to be expected. The situation was extremely serious. The Ambassador imparted considerable solemnity to his *démarche*.

I told him that as yet I knew nothing of the latest developments. I would pass on his information to the Foreign Minister as soon as possible.<sup>4</sup>

BÜLOW

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note against this passage on another copy (5643/H000549-50): "The Polish Ambassador's version is not quite correct. R[itter]."

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath], Mar. 7." (2) "The Chancellor is informed. L[ammers], Mar. 7."

## No. 23

6710/E506350

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht  
to the Foreign Minister and the Reich Minister of Propaganda*

W.A.L. Ia. 575/36

BERLIN, March 7, 1936.

II R 310.

Subject: Briefing of Attachés in case of enquiries.

1) When the French Military Attaché<sup>1</sup> made enquiries he was informed orally by the Army through the Attaché Group that:

"The Rhineland will be occupied in the course of March 7 and 8 by

<sup>1</sup> Brigadier General G. Renondeau.

nineteen battalions and thirteen artillery units from the centre of Germany. The operation will be completed on March 8.

"The major part of the troops will be stationed on the Rhine and in the Rhine Valley between the Black Forest and the Rhine. Aachen, Trier and Saarbrücken will have small garrisons."

2) In case of enquiries the Air Attachés will be briefed directly by the Luftwaffe, and in the following words:

"On the Rhine two groups of fighter aircraft have arrived today at their new peacetime stations at Cologne, Düsseldorf, Frankfurt on Main and Mannheim.

"Two anti-aircraft battalions will take up their permanent stations at Cologne and Mannheim."<sup>2</sup>

By order:  
KEITEL

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<sup>2</sup> In a communication of Mar. 9 (6710/E506488) the Reich Air Ministry confirmed the information contained in the last two paragraphs of the document here printed and added: "Under no circumstances must the Attachés gain the impression that the above-mentioned units represent the full strength of the Luftwaffe in the Rhineland. If there are any questions on this, it will be stated that the final strength cannot as yet be foreseen." The Air Ministry's communication was initiated by Bülow on Mar. 10 and a marginal note in his handwriting reads: "[Dept] II M. What is the strength of a 'group'?" In a minute of Mar. 11 (6710/E506489) Counsellor Schultz-Sponholz noted that each of the two groups consisted of 27 single-seater fighter planes and about 210 men; there were no reserve planes. This minute bears the following marginal note: "Col. Wenninger (the [German] Air Attaché in London), who is in Berlin for two days, has been instructed by the Reich Air Minister to inform the British that Germany has no bombers in the former demilitarized zone. D[ieckhoff], Mar. 11."

[EDITORS' NOTE: On March 8, the French and Belgian Governments addressed telegrams to M. Avenol, Secretary General to the League of Nations, seizing the League of the German action and requesting that all measures be taken for summoning a meeting of the League of Nations Council as soon as possible. For the texts of these telegrams see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 312. In a telegram of the same day (6710/E506352-53), received in the Foreign Ministry at 12:30 p.m. on March 9, Avenol apprised the German Government of the text of the French telegram, informed them that the Council had been summoned to meet at Geneva on Thursday, March 13, and asked to be informed if the German Government as a signatory to Locarno wished to participate. He apprised the German Government of the Belgian step in a second telegram of March 9 (6710/E506410-11).

On the evening of March 8, the French Minister President, Sarraut, spoke on the French wireless; in the course of his speech he rejected the German Memorandum of March 7 as a basis for negotiations. The text of the speech is reproduced in *Documents on International Affairs, 1936* (London 1937), pp. 46-51. A German translation prepared in the Foreign Ministry is filmed as 3242/712437-47.]

## No. 24

6710/E506290-91

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Paris*

Telegram

No. 99

BERLIN, March 8, 1936—10:35 p.m.  
zu II R 285<sup>1</sup> II.

With reference to your telegram No. 127 of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

The Reichstag speech<sup>2</sup> contains, as I emphatically pointed out to the French Ambassador when he enquired,<sup>3</sup> the reply to François-Poncet's *démarche*.<sup>4</sup> His audience with the Führer is referred to not only in the Memorandum<sup>5</sup> but also in that passage in the speech which relates to the delayed appearance of the *Paris Midi* interview,<sup>6</sup> and above all in the list of German proposals which were rejected or which remained unanswered. Already on March 2 the Führer and Chancellor reminded François-Poncet of earlier proposals, especially those in his speech of May last,<sup>7</sup> which received no answer. Other passages in the Reichstag speech also mention the conversation of March 2.

For your information:

The French assertion that Germany asked for the *démarche* of March 2 to be kept secret is untrue. I merely rejected François-Poncet's proposal that a joint communiqué be published because that and the *démarche* itself were clearly only diversionary manoeuvres designed to weaken the effect of the interview, which had at first been suppressed altogether.

NEURATH<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 17.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 13 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 604.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 17, footnote 6.

<sup>7</sup> Of May 21, 1935; see vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>8</sup> The document here printed is marked: "Please despatch. Ko[tze], [Mar.] 8." Neurath's initial validating the telegram is on an undated draft in Bülow's handwriting (6710/E506288-89), which was emended by Neurath. A marginal note in Bülow's handwriting on this reads: "NB. The story that we asked for the interview to be 'kept secret' has been spread by the French wireless and represented as particularly perfidious."

## No. 25

6710/E506320-22

*Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

WITH PRIORITY  
MOST URGENTBERLIN, March 8, 1936—10:35 p.m.  
e.o. II R 293.

For (1)–(4) and (15) only: For information: Our Missions with the other Powers who are members of the Council are being instructed as follows:

for (1)–(14) [*sic*: (15)]:

Now that the League of Nations has been summoned to meet on March 10 [*sic*],<sup>2</sup> in order, at the request of the French, to deliberate on the German action, you should make clear and emphasize the German point of view to the Government to which you are accredited, and ensure that the historical importance of the German offer for the definitive consolidation of European politics is acknowledged, and that Council representatives are instructed to prevent precipitate resolutions again postponing Germany's return to Geneva. If one assumes, as does the other side, that Locarno is still valid, the Council would indeed still be competent, under Article 4, paragraph 1, to take a decision on the contention that the Treaty has been violated, without, in the event of any findings against Germany, being able to draw any further conclusions. (It would not, therefore, be competent, even on the basis of the French view, to resolve upon any sanctions.) But even the mere determination of a violation of the Treaty, such as took place after Stresa in connection with Germany's right to military sovereignty, would ruin the political situation for the future.

Judging by the impressions so far obtained, it appears that an important point in the impending discussions will be the contention that, if we regarded the Franco-Soviet Alliance as incompatible with Locarno, we should have begun by submitting this dispute to the International Court of Justice. On this point we argue, first of all, that we cannot regard the International Court as competent to decide on the interpretation of the basic principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations. Apart from this the Court would in no circumstances be able to clear up the preponderantly political side of the question. If, however, the Powers who are members of the Council should wish, merely from the purely formal aspect, to take the opposite view, then

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the German Missions in (1) London, (2) Rome, (3) Paris, (4) Moscow, (5) Ankara, (6) Madrid, (7) Warsaw, (8) Buenos Aires, (9) Bucharest, (10) Copenhagen, (11) Lisbon, (12) Quito, and (13) Santiago di Chile, the Consulate General in (14) Sydney, and the Consulate in (15) Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> The Council of the League of Nations was summoned to meet on Mar. 13; see Editors' Note, p. 45.



the accusation of unilateral action having been taken without a prior decision by the International Court should rather be made against France. In spite of our representations, France concluded an alliance with the Soviet Union, thus, unilaterally and by means of a *fait accompli*, disregarding the legal question which we had raised immediately and in all due form in May 1935. We cannot acknowledge the restoration of full sovereignty in the Rhineland to be, in fact, a more dangerous *fait accompli* than the military alliance with the Soviet Union.

NEURATH

## No. 26

6710/E506301-03

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, March 8, 1936—10:45 p.m.

No. 25 of March 8

e.o. [*sic*: zu] II R 287<sup>1</sup> IV.

With reference to your telegram No. 25 of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

Before taking their decision the Reich Government had carefully considered the effect of the denunciation of Locarno and of the offer of a new guarantee of peace on friendly Italy in her present situation. They have, however, come to conclusions different from those reached by Mussolini under the first impression of your communication. Above all, the German action very greatly eases Italy's position in her conflict with the League of Nations over Abyssinia. Your metaphor of the diversionary offensive is entirely relevant. Fear that the sanctions might be intensified should be finally removed. Conversely, Italy's fear lest the German offer should strengthen the League of Nations is incomprehensible, since the effect of our offer on the position of the League of Nations will, in the present circumstances, certainly not make itself felt to Italy's disadvantage. For the League of Nations will for the time being be occupied with our denunciation of Locarno and its consequences, and the question of Germany's return can only be dealt with when agreement has been reached on the other points in the German offer.

I have already told Attolico<sup>2</sup> that, even on our return to the League of Nations, we should not adopt an anti-Italian attitude. Moreover Mussolini can surely not doubt that within the League of Nations we should act as an important counterweight to the preponderance of one side, especially in relation to Soviet Russia.

There has been no new German offer regarding Czechoslovakia, but merely a repetition of an earlier proposal, of which, as is known,

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 11.

Czechoslovakia, according to her statements at the time, was not able to avail herself.<sup>3</sup> In this connection it should be said that the arbitration treaties with Czechia and Poland,<sup>4</sup> which, in fact, come to the same thing as non-aggression pacts, have not been denounced by us, and are therefore still in force.

Now that we are in possession of the bone of contention, the Rhine-land zone, we see no danger to ourselves of having to meet any additional demands on the part of France. We regard our offer as the maximum programme.

I suggest that you let it be known in your conversations with Mussolini and Suvich that Italy's action in Abyssinia did, *de facto*, afford us a certain amount of relief in the spring. They must admit that we did not in any way exploit this situation *against Italy*, but that, on the contrary, we supported Italy as extensively as possible. Now our action is affording Italy extensive relief in a difficult situation. We do not grudge Italy the advantages accruing to her from this, but we in our turn expect Italy to refrain from exploiting the situation *against us*.

NEURATH

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, documents Nos. 68, 83, footnote 3, and 95, footnote 5, and vol. IV of this Series, document No. 128.

<sup>4</sup> Arbitration treaties between Germany and Czechoslovakia and Germany and Poland were concluded at Locarno on Oct. 16, 1925, as part of the complex of treaties signed there that day. For the texts see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LIV, pp. 289-363.

## No. 27

6710/E506368-69

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 7 of March 8

BRUSSELS, March 8, 1936—10:55 p.m.

Received March 9—3:15 a.m.

II R 313.

With reference to our telegram No. 6 of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

On the Minister President's instructions, Langenhove has just informed me that, in accordance with Article 4, paragraph 1 of the Locarno Pact,<sup>2</sup> the Belgian Cabinet intend to bring the matter of the German Memorandum<sup>3</sup> before the Council of the League of Nations.

As I hear from a reliable source, the Belgian Government yesterday suggested an immediate discussion to the Powers signatories to the Locarno Pact and asked them what attitude they were adopting, after the German action, in regard to the obligations towards Belgium. It

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 14.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

appears that all the replies, including Italy's, promised that these obligations would be maintained. France has agreed to a discussion on condition that the French and Belgian appeal to the League of Nations is made *beforehand*. Britain, as a guarantor Power, is refraining from taking this step, but has advised Belgium to take it. The Belgian Government fear that the similarity between the Belgian and the French *démarches* might be interpreted to mean that Belgium intends to follow France unconditionally, which, in view of the harshness of the French point of view, would be embarrassing for the Belgian Government with regard both to Germany and to the mood prevailing in Flemish circles, and might lead to difficulties in domestic politics, especially in view of the impending elections. The clear wording of Article 4, paragraph 1 of the Locarno Pact, and the British advice finally removed these hesitations.

As a result of van Zeeland's moderating influence, more far-reaching proposals, particularly the French suggestion that military measures should be taken, have been rejected by the Cabinet, who, although there has been no formal resolution, are agreed to following Britain or her advice.

It is assumed here that the formal legal treatment in the proposal [*sic*] of the Memorandum will at first prevent the positive German proposals from being taken into account at Geneva, and that this might lead to the creation of a Locarno front without Germany.

The press here, including the Flemish-Catholic papers, condemns the method of the German step from the legal point of view. The majority of the newspapers regard the argument about the Russian Pact as a pretext, oppose taking up the German proposals because, after the violation of the Locarno Pact, any new treaty would be of doubtful value, and demand strong action against Germany. A few, mainly Flemish, newspapers warn against scaremongering and advocate study of the German proposals.

BRÄUER

## No. 28

67110/E506384-85

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 26 of March 8

ROME, March 8, 1936—11:15 p.m.

Received March 9—12:30 a.m.

II R 320.

Suvich asked me to come and see him this evening to inform me that the Locarno States had been summoned to meet on Tuesday<sup>1</sup> afternoon in Paris (the Committee of Thirteen having been put off till

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Mar. 10; see also Editors' Note, p. 77.

Wednesday),<sup>2</sup> and that the Italian Government would only be represented by the Ambassador in Paris,<sup>3</sup> who had been instructed to make clear Italy's special position as a country against which sanctions had been applied, to remain an observer, and merely to take conditional cognizance of all resolutions. I replied that I could, therefore, report to my Government that Italy would maintain . . . (group mutilated)<sup>4</sup> the recently discussed reserve towards the counter-reaction to our reaction; this Suvich confirmed, with the request that his statement should be treated as confidential, as the impression must be avoided that the Locarno Power, Italy, had come to an understanding with Germany.

Suvich, who telephoned to their delegate in Geneva<sup>5</sup> and to Attolico during our conversation, added that it was the Italians' impression that intransigence prevailed in France, that was to say, it was intended to demand the withdrawal of our measures, while the British were displaying a tendency not to let slip the chance of Germany's returning to the League of Nations, especially in view of the conflict between Britain and Italy, which was why they were at pains somewhat to restrain the French. In any case the Council of the League of Nations would be convened first. Flandin was not going to Geneva owing to the Senate debate;<sup>6</sup> Paul-Boncour was going instead.

Suvich then returned to yesterday's conversation with Mussolini<sup>7</sup> and remarked that Mussolini had afterwards voiced the opinion that Germany must, of course, herself determine her own policy, but that she must realize that, by declaring her readiness to return to the League of Nations, entirely unexpectedly and just at this moment, she had made Italy's policy difficult in the extreme. I once more drew his attention to my point about a diversionary offensive; Suvich admitted this, but again emphasized the disadvantageous position in which Italy had been placed. The immediate result had inevitably been the complete recasting of the Italian reply to Geneva;<sup>8</sup> they had left out the reservations and only stated their readiness in principle to negotiate. To my question as to whether Italy would negotiate under sanctions, he replied that she would not now demand that sanctions be removed before the commencement of the negotiations, because she could be answered by a demand that hostilities should cease. On the other hand they would demand that no further mention should be made of

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 11; the Committee of Thirteen was to have met on Mar. 10 (see document No. 1, footnote 1).

<sup>3</sup> Vittorio Cerruti.

<sup>4</sup> This passage does not, in fact, differ from that in the Rome draft (3175/682543-46).

<sup>5</sup> Bova Scoppa.

<sup>6</sup> On Mar. 10 a declaration of the French Government's policy with regard to the occupation of the Rhineland was read in the Chamber by Sarraut and in the Senate by Flandin (see *Journal Officiel de la République Française, Débats Parlementaires, Sénat*, 1936, pp. 235-237).

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 18.

<sup>8</sup> i.e., to the Committee of Thirteen's appeal (see document No. 1, footnote 1); for the text of the Italian communication of Mar. 8 see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 395.



intensifying the sanctions. They wished to avoid Geneva as the venue for the negotiations, they wished to negotiate with Abyssinia direct, and they were very dubious indeed about the formula "In the spirit of the League of Nations".

HASSELL

## No. 29

6710/E506388-89

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 46 of March 8

Moscow, March 8, 1936—1:50 a.m. [*sic*].

Received March 9—12:45 a.m.

II R 321.

*Izvestia* and *Pravda* publish reports on the [Reich] Government declaration, headed "Germany breaks the Locarno Treaty". The substance of the Führer's speech<sup>1</sup> is given in a greatly abbreviated Tass report which leaves out several important statements, for instance the declaration that Germany has no territorial demands in Europe and that Germany, whilst avoiding intimate contact of any other kind with the Soviet Union, will maintain existing political and economic relations. The Tass report does, however, mention the seven points in the Reich Government's statement.

In *Izvestia*, under the heading "Another scrap of paper torn up", Radek says that since May 21, 1934, Germany has been systematically preparing to violate the Locarno Treaty and that the German propaganda thesis about the undermining of . . . (group mutilated) by the other side, particularly by the Franco-Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance, is a "myth". With his usual impertinence, Radek indulges in irrelevant polemics against the distinction between Russia and Bolshevism. Radek describes the German offers regarding a mutual demilitarized zone as unacceptable to Belgium and France, who are "weaker than Germany". The offer of a non-aggression pact to the Eastern neighbour States conceals, he says, Germany's desire to obtain from France freedom of action in the East. Radek is silent on Germany's readiness to return to the League of Nations; and in conclusion he makes the following statement: Any further steps on the part of German imperialism depend on how France, Britain and Belgium react to the German action. If the Western Powers can muster enough

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

strength quickly "to work out defensive counter-measures", Hitler will hesitate to play with his . . . (group missing). If the Western Powers show signs of irresolution and of a lack of united will and thought, they will have war in the West in the near rather than in the distant future. The *Pravda* article speaks of a fresh act of aggression on the part of German Fascism. The worthlessness of the German assertion that the Franco-Soviet Treaty is incompatible with the Locarno Treaty is demonstrated by the fact that, at the time, Germany made no objections of any kind to the Pact of Mutual Assistance between France and Poland and Czechoslovakia which was signed simultaneously at Locarno.<sup>2</sup> All the German offers, especially her readiness to . . . (group missing) to the League of Nations, constitute blackmail and an attempt to drive a wedge between Britain and France.

The mood of the Diplomatic Corps here is, in so far as it has yet been possible to ascertain, on the whole impartial, and in part sympathetic. But Bullitt, the American Ambassador, has described the German action to several of his colleagues as a "bombshell". Litvinov is said to have been very careful in his utterances to the Polish Ambassador and to have said that they must first wait and see what attitude the French adopted.

TIPPELSKIRCH

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 26, footnote 4.

## No. 30

6710/E506363-64

### *The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

A 560

BERNE, March 8, 1936.

Received March 9.

II R 312.

Subject: Federal Councillor Motta on the denunciation of the Locarno Treaty.

With reference to my telegram of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

When I saw the Federal Councillor responsible for Swiss foreign policy yesterday in the late afternoon, that is to say, several hours after the eventful Reichstag session, he was in a tranquil mood.

M. Motta had been very anxious during the past week. His impression of Mr. Eden at Geneva<sup>2</sup> had been unfavourable. He found the

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E506292); this was telegram No. 46 of Mar. 7, which briefly reported on the interview with Motta.

<sup>2</sup> Eden was in Geneva Mar. 2-4 for the meetings of the Committees of Eighteen and Thirteen.

British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs nervous, unpredictable, and "un-English". The Italians, for their part, had warned Motta that if the sanctions were intensified they would not only withdraw from the League of Nations, but would also denounce their political treaties with the sanctions States. For Switzerland this would mean that, if she did not vote against the oil embargo,<sup>3</sup> Italy would withdraw from the Italo-Swiss treaty of arbitration. As Motta again said to me yesterday, if such a development were to ensue, Switzerland's position in the League of Nations would become highly precarious. She would not, however, feel any less uncomfortable outside it. Motta was, therefore, very much in sympathy with Flandin's Laval-like policy, and was impatiently awaiting an Italian reply to the Geneva peace appeal<sup>4</sup> which would express agreement at least in principle.

But while he was still in uncertainty, there came the great German event, the denunciation of the Locarno Pact. Motta probably hailed us in his heart as a kind of Winkelried<sup>5</sup> who would at least draw everyone's attention to himself and who would take the bitterness out of the Italian conflict. Motta expressed this to me as follows: It was a fact that Flandin, with whom Motta had had detailed conversations in Geneva, was peeved with the British, and had no intention of taking harsher action against Italy for Britain's sake. As a result the British would not now be very much inclined to render the French energetic assistance against Germany. This strange constellation seemed to Motta to be favourable for a satisfactory outcome of both the Italian conflict and the present German step towards freedom, which he had recently discussed with me theoretically and which he had described as a dangerous gamble.

I particularly emphasized to M. Motta, who will be back in Geneva during the coming week, how important it was that the constructive content of the Führer's proposals should not be sabotaged beforehand by the usual methods of the Council of the League of Nations. Motta, who is known greatly to desire Germany's return to the League of Nations, entirely agreed with this point of view.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 2, footnote 8.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 1, footnote 1.

<sup>5</sup> Arnold von Winkelried, a mediaeval Swiss hero who, at the battle of Sempach in 1386, is said to have drawn on to his own body the spears of the opposing Austrian knights, thus opening a way into their ranks for his fellow-countrymen.

## No. 31

*Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 9, 1936.

Yesterday evening, just before 9 o'clock, Ambassador von Hoesch telephoned me and told me the following:

The Foreign Office had just informed him that Mr. Eden intended to make a statement in the House of Commons today on the German action.<sup>1</sup> He would begin by giving a brief summary of the substance of the German Memorandum, would then report on his conversation with the German Ambassador,<sup>2</sup> and would, finally, make a statement of which the wording follows verbatim:<sup>3</sup>

"As to the later parts of the Ambassadors communication I said that I would have carefully to consider these, but clearly the declaration in respect of Germany's attitude towards the League was most important.

"The Ambassador at this point informed me that the German Government's decision in regard to the League was due to their desire to meet the views frequently expressed by the Primeminister [*sic*] and myself, when we emphasized that the policy of H.M. Government was based upon the League and upon collective security. Germany, he said, was willing to share in such a policy and there were no conditions attached to her return to the League. She wished to return now. While the German Government hoped that at some later date the Covenant would be divorced from the Treaty of Versailles and Germany given some measure of satisfaction in respect to colonies, these were not conditions, but matters for negotiation subsequent to Germany's return to the League."

After consulting with the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary by telephone, I rang up Herr von Hoesch again shortly before 10 p.m. and told him that, apart from the emendations shown in the attached text (the emendations are marked in red),<sup>4</sup> we agreed to the text. We

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 56.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 3, enclosure, and 21.

<sup>3</sup> The two paragraphs which follow are in English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> This amended text (3242/712436), which reads as follows, differs at some points from the actual text of Eden's statement; such differences are inserted in square brackets; Dieckhoff's red crayon markings are shown by italics (denoting words underlined) and asterisks (denoting red crosses):

"As to the later parts of the Ambassador's communication I said that I [His Majesty's Government] would have carefully to consider these, but clearly the declaration in respect of Germany's attitude towards the League was most important.

"The Ambassador at this point informed me that the German Government's decision in regard to the League was due to a large extent [was to a large extent due] to their desire to meet the views frequently expressed by the Prime Minister and myself, when we emphasized that the policy of H.M. Government was based upon the League and upon



had unalterable objections to the phrase: "She wished to return now."<sup>5</sup> It was essential that Herr von Hoesch make it clear to Mr. Eden, before the statement was made in the House of Commons, that we had no intention of going to Geneva, either as an invited guest or as a member, before clarity had been achieved on the other points of our proposals. The British Government must realize that the last point of our proposals could not be settled in advance, without our knowing what was to become of the other points. Herr von Hoesch quite saw this, and will settle this point with Mr. Eden this morning.

Our Memorandum will, as Herr von Hoesch further told me, be published this morning by the British Government in the form of a White Paper.<sup>6</sup> On Tuesday<sup>7</sup> the Locarno Powers are to hold a discussion in Paris, in which Mr. Eden will take part.

DIECKHOFF

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collective security. Germany, he said, was willing to share in such a policy and there were no conditions attached to her return to the League.\* While the German Government expected that in due time the Covenant would be divorced from the Treaty of Versailles and Germany given\* satisfaction in respect of colonies [and the question of colonial rights would be settled] these were not conditions, but matters [matter] for negotiation subsequent to Germany's return to the League."

<sup>5</sup> This phrase is in English in the original.

<sup>6</sup> Cmd. 5118 of 1936.

<sup>7</sup> i.e., Mar. 10; see Editors' Note, p. 77.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On March 9, the British Foreign Secretary made a statement in the House of Commons on the action of the German Government in sending troops into the Rhineland; for the text see *Parl. Deb., House of Commons*, vol. 309, cols 1808-13; see also document No. 31.]

## No. 32

6710/E506395

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 16 of March 9

PRAGUE, March 9, 1936—11:10 a.m.

Received March 9—1:05 p.m.

II R 326.

The Minister President<sup>1</sup> left for Vienna last night, and is expected back on Tuesday.<sup>2</sup> He had informed me the other day of his intention of making this visit, and promised me details on the substance and results of the conversations on his return. The fact that the journey was not postponed shows with what tranquillity the Government here view the situation.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Milan Hodža.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 10.

## No. 33

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 36 of March 9

LONDON, March 9, 1936—1:14 p.m.

Received March 9—3:40 p.m.

II R 324.

I had dinner last night with some of my acquaintances from among the circle of political personalities, amongst whom Duff Cooper, the British War Minister, was also present.

In an exhaustive conversation with the Minister, with whom I have been on friendly terms for twenty-five years, I asked him about his views on the situation.

Cooper said first of all that he much deplored the way in which we had acted and reproached us with having unilaterally violated a treaty which we had concluded of our own free will; this I refuted, pointing out that France had destroyed Locarno through her alliance with Bolshevism. The Minister then stated that with our offers, whose importance he fully appreciated, we could assuredly have achieved the abolition of demilitarization by negotiation; this I firmly contested, citing the obstinacy of the French. But I again had the impression that, as other signs have of late also seemed to me to indicate, the idea of the moral indefensibility of unilateral demilitarization has become firmly rooted in some British minds.

Cooper then went on to say that, though the British people were prepared to fight for France in the event of a German incursion into French territory, they would not resort to arms on account of the recent occupation of the German Rhineland. The people did not know much about the demilitarization provisions, and most of them probably took the view that they did not care "two hoots" about the Germans reoccupying their own territory.

It was of course a different matter where general policy was concerned. Here one could expect opposition from the French, who would not want to accept the "breach of treaty". Moreover, as regards the German offers, one would have to expect to hear from all quarters the objection raised that no trust could be placed in fresh obligations undertaken by Germany, now that Germany had broken a treaty which she had concluded of her own free will; as a result, the position was definitely . . . (one word missing) and, for the moment, quite unpredictable.

With regard to the atmosphere in Parliament, the Minister said that on the Right many hoped that Germany would be taken at her word and that, in particular, the chance of bringing Germany back into the League of Nations would be seized. Such tendencies also existed on

the Left, but they were held in check by opposition to the new Germany. The attitude of the League of Nations Union and of Lord Cecil,<sup>1</sup> which had not yet been ascertained, would probably play its part. I will try to see Cecil tomorrow.

Amongst the other people present, I found several to be warmly in favour of the basic idea of the overall solution for which Germany is striving, coupled, however, with regret over the so-called breach of treaty.

The young Lord Duncannon, who has just arrived from Geneva, and who works in the Secretariat of the League of Nations, informed me that satisfaction was predominantly felt in Geneva and that even Secretary General Avenol had said he hoped that an agreement resulting in Germany's return to the League of Nations could be reached.

HOESCH

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<sup>1</sup> Robert, 1st Viscount Cecil, former Conservative Minister, Chairman of the League of Nations Union, a non-official, non-party organization.

## No. 34

6710/E506571

### *The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 6 of March 9

SANTIAGO, March 9, 1936—2:05 p.m.

Received March 9—10:50 p.m.

II R 372.

In reply to telegram No. 2.<sup>1</sup>

In a long conversation on Sunday<sup>2</sup> before the arrival of the instructions referred to above, the Minister for Foreign Affairs<sup>3</sup> of his own accord expressed to me his sympathy with our action. His sincerity is beyond doubt. When I called on him today to carry out the above instructions, he was, after conversation with the President,<sup>4</sup> more guarded, and promised only "careful study, with due regard for impartiality and the cordiality of our relations".

This change probably stems from the stiffened attitude of the British and the unreliability of Italy's attitude as reported by the press. So far the press has only in rare cases taken a purely factual attitude. In conversations there is general understanding and goodwill. In spite of this, hardly more can be expected from Chile than what Italy got in the sanctions question: lukewarm support of the majority. I would refer you to report No. 1014 of April 24, 1935.<sup>5</sup>

SCHOEN

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 7, which was despatched to Santiago under this number.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 8.

<sup>3</sup> M. Cruchaga Tocornal.

<sup>4</sup> Arturo Alessandri Palma.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (M279/M011492-94).

## No. 35

6710/E506399

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 37 of March 9

LONDON, March 9, 1936—3:07 p.m.

Received March 9—5:15 p.m.

II R 325.

Wigram, on whom Bismarck called this morning about the passage concerning my arguments in Eden's House of Commons statement,<sup>1</sup> told Bismarck that, as a result of Germany's action, the main weight of future developments had been placed on Britain's shoulders. In spite of the relatively favourable utterances in today's press, people in Germany must realize quite clearly that very considerable displeasure about the German step prevailed both in the Foreign Office and among many leading personalities here; now that Germany, for her part, had had recourse to such a stroke, people in Germany must reckon on the fact that it was now France's turn to take counter-action.

It was of the utmost importance that the German Government should, in the immediate future, exercise restraint in order not to make the position still worse. The position of the French Government was naturally made more difficult by the imminence of the elections, but he hoped that, after France's first outburst of wrath had subsided, one might be able to deal positively with international problems. If it were to prove possible to induce those at Geneva to let the matter go with a moral condemnation of Germany, this must be deemed a great success. Bismarck gained the impression that the British delegation would try to let matters go no further than such a moral condemnation.

Wigram is accompanying Eden, who was due to leave this afternoon, to Paris and Geneva.<sup>2</sup>

HOESCH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 31.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.



## No. 36

6710/E506420-21

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 16 of March 9

BUDAPEST, March 9, 1936—3:14 p.m.

Received March 9—6:00 p.m.

II R 336.

With reference to your despatch RM 190 of March 7.<sup>1</sup>

I have just communicated the Memorandum,<sup>2</sup> which arrived shortly before, to Kánya, who knew from Sztójay's report<sup>3</sup> that this step was coming, and who thanked me. He expressed pleasure over Saturday's event, but said that impressions so far gained were not sufficient to allow of his taking up a definite attitude. The Regent,<sup>4</sup> too, had told him on Saturday how very happy he was about it. Kánya said that he had been surprised, not by the event itself, which Sztójay had reported some time ago as being in the air, but by the moment chosen. The surprise would have been an even more pleasant one for him if the denunciation had been made in concert with Mussolini, which, from Villani's<sup>5</sup> reports, seemed to him not to have been the case. In any case the Duce could, in his view, only regard our step as easing his own position as a whole, since attention would now be wholly concentrated on the German action. He has not yet received any reports from Rome itself, so that as yet he does not know anything about Hassell's conversation with Mussolini on March 7.<sup>6</sup> As regards the atmosphere in Paris, Khuen<sup>7</sup> had wired him that the great calm in London was having a very calming effect on France, particularly on the press, although he had observed considerable agitation among the French Ministers. Further developments now depended on France and Britain. One must be prepared for a few weeks of agitated clamour, but serious European complications need not be feared.

I can give no opinion on how far Kánya will revise the positive attitude to the German action which he expressed today when it becomes clear to him that the offer of a non-aggression pact also includes Czechoslovakia.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 7 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> In a minute of Mar. 7 (4602/E190431) Bülow recorded that the German Memorandum had been communicated and explained to Sztójay.

<sup>4</sup> Miklós Horthy de Nagybánya.

<sup>5</sup> Frigyes, Baron Villani, Hungarian Minister in Rome.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 18; various Missions including Budapest had been informed by telegram of Mar. 8 (6710/E506300) of Mussolini's reactions to the news of the German action.

<sup>7</sup> Count Khuen-Héderváry, Hungarian Minister in Paris.

For the rest his Chef de Cabinet<sup>8</sup> told me in confidence that the Foreign Minister had himself on Saturday taken part in formulating the directive which was sent to the press here through the Head of the Press Department.<sup>9</sup> See also my today's despatch.<sup>10</sup>

MACKENSEN

<sup>8</sup> Count Csáky.

<sup>9</sup> In telegram No. 15 of Mar. 9 (6710/E506417) Mackensen had reported that, with the Head of the Press Department's active support, he had been able to ensure a favourable attitude on the part of practically the entire Hungarian press.

<sup>10</sup> Evidently a reference to Mackensen's report A.55 P2 of Mar. 9 under cover of which he transmitted extracts from Hungarian newspapers (6710/E506618-28).

## No. 37

6710/E506401

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, March 9, 1936—[5:30 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

No. 130 of March 9

Received March 9—7:00 p.m.

II R 327.

The substance of the radio speech which the Minister President made yesterday<sup>2</sup> leads, in my view, to the conclusion that, on the one hand, the French Government have already assured themselves of a certain, though not yet sufficient, amount of support from Britain, but that, on the other hand, they intend to push the British Government further along the French path by means of a definitive statement of the French point of view.

This assessment seems to be to some extent confirmed by information which has reached me, according to which the British Ambassador<sup>3</sup> is said to have given Flandin yesterday the following personal impression of the probable British attitude: the British Government would take pains to retain as much as possible of the German offers, especially in connection with the League of Nations, but, whilst letting France take the lead, would support the French Government in the struggle against the creation of *faits accomplis*.

FORSTER

<sup>1</sup> The time of despatch is taken from the Paris draft (6403/E474917).

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> Sir George Russell Clerk.

## No. 38

6710/E506476

*The Minister in Denmark to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 7 of March 9

COPENHAGEN, March 9, 1936—7:18 p.m.

Received March 9—9:30 p.m.

II R 343.

With reference to your telegram No. 7.<sup>1</sup>

I have just had the opportunity of setting forth our point of view in detail to the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> who is leaving for Geneva on Wednesday<sup>3</sup> evening, and I met with full understanding. He mentioned two points towards which he intended to work, as far as it was possible for him, as the representative of the small Powers, to do so:

1) The moment for oral negotiations between the Great Powers had now arrived.

2) Under no circumstances could there be any question of Article 16 [of the Covenant of the League of Nations] being the basis for the deliberations of the Council.

He did not know what the French intended to propose, perhaps they would want the case referred to the International Court of Justice; he admitted to me that the matter, apart from its formal legal side, must also be viewed from the political and psychological aspects.

I then negotiated in detail with the League of Nations expert, Cohn,<sup>4</sup> who, together with Minister Erik Scavenius,<sup>5</sup> is to accompany Foreign Minister Munch to Geneva. His opinion is that from the formal legal point of view our position is hardly tenable, but that the question should not . . .<sup>6</sup> French wished, be dealt with from the legal, but from the political point of view.

RICHTHOFEN

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<sup>1</sup> This was the number under which document No. 25 was sent to Copenhagen.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. P. R. Munch.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Mar. 11.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. G. Cohn, Adviser on International Law in the Danish Foreign Ministry.

<sup>5</sup> Erik Scavenius, former Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs.

<sup>6</sup> Typewritten marginal note at this point: "A number of groups appear to be missing here." The draft in the files of the Legation in Copenhagen (4941/E273199) reads: "... that the question should not, as the French wished, be ..."

## No. 39

6710/E506502

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 19 of March 9

BUCHAREST, March 9, 1936—10:00 p.m.

Received March 9—11:55 p.m.

II R 358.

With reference to your telegram No. 22 of [March] 8.<sup>1</sup>

Titulescu congratulates the Führer on his masterly speech, but profoundly regrets the premature sending in of troops and also our failure to submit the question of the reconciliation of the Franco-Russian Pact with the Locarno Treaty to arbitration in good time, and thus to secure for ourselves a solid legal basis. In reply to my emphatic statements in the sense of your instructions,<sup>2</sup> he expressed grave concern lest the Council of the League of Nations should not merely find a breach of treaty, as was the case after Stresa,<sup>3</sup> but should also adopt the very much more far-reaching and harmful proposals of France and Belgium.<sup>4</sup> The Council would, in accordance with the Covenant of the League of Nations, derive its terms of reference from the fact of troops having been sent in.

My representations in the sense of the last passage [in your telegram] obviously impressed him, but he kept on returning to the indispensable legal basis, in which small States especially could not but see their sole weapon, and the absence of which in the present case would shatter faith in our offers, sincere though they certainly were.

King Carol was particularly angry with Germany and was said to have talked about the danger of German troops marching through Rumanian territory against Russia.

Titulescu closed the conversation on a note of anxiety, complaining that he, who would so much have liked to find the way to Germany's side, should now be faced with so very different a task where Germany was concerned.

Titulescu had instructed the press on Saturday evening to avoid exaggeration; as a result of this, and of our own contacts here, the editors of nearly all newspapers have treated our action with moderation.

POCHHAMMER

<sup>1</sup> This was the number under which document No. 25 was sent to Bucharest.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 7.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.



## No. 40

6710/E506499

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 30 of March 9

MADRID, March 9, 1936—10:35 p.m.

Received March 10—3:15 a.m.

II R 357.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 30 of [March] 6<sup>1</sup> and 31 of [March] 8.<sup>2</sup>

I have strongly emphasized the German point of view to Foreign Minister Barcia, whilst at the same time refuting the argument contained in yesterday's speech by Sarraut.<sup>3</sup> The Minister was reserved in what he said on the legal position, but showed understanding for our struggle to restore sovereignty over German territory and to remove one-sided burdens in accordance with the concept of equality of rights. In view of the Communist danger which is at present threatening Spain and the control of which is worrying the Government here, the Minister appreciated the importance of the political situation which had been created for Germany by the Franco-Soviet Russian alliance, and described Germany's position as being in the van of the fight against the spread of Communism in Western Europe. Seen in this light the Minister appeared to understand the . . . (group mutilated) character of our action. He stressed the universal value of our positive proposals, which, he said, it was necessary to examine. He hoped that the Council, conscious of their responsibility, would find a solution which would make our return possible; in that case an important step towards the pacification of Europe would have been taken, and it would be due to Germany.

The Foreign Minister informed me that he was leaving for Geneva tomorrow with express instructions from the Cabinet to speak in the Council in favour of maintaining peace. Madariaga,<sup>4</sup> who was expected back from America, had also been called to Geneva.

During the conversation, which took place in the auspicious atmosphere resultant on the conclusion of the German-Spanish trade agreement<sup>5</sup> and the consequent satisfaction of the Government here, I gained the impression that the Minister was favourably inclined.

VÖLCKERS

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 7, which was transmitted to Madrid under this number.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 25, which was transmitted to Madrid under this number.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>4</sup> Salvador de Madariaga, Spanish representative on the Council of the League of Nations.

<sup>5</sup> A German-Spanish Trade Agreement was signed in Madrid on Mar. 9; it has been filmed as M280/M011499-516.

## No. 41

6710/E506538-39

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 29 of March 9

ROME, March 9, 1936—10:45 p.m.

Received, March 10—1:25 a.m.

II R 353.

I had another conversation with Mussolini<sup>1</sup> this evening after the signing of the implementation agreement.<sup>2</sup> I spoke in the sense of your telegram No. 25 of March 8,<sup>3</sup> and emphasized that Germany's attitude to Italy had not changed and that Italy's position had undoubtedly been eased, since, for one thing, the possibility of sanctions being intensified had probably now been finally eliminated; I also emphasized our intention of adopting a friendly attitude towards Italy after our return to the League of Nations and of acting as a counterweight to the one-sided preponderance of certain other factors. In any case, our entry into the League of Nations would take some little time, since agreement on the other points would first have to be reached. I went on to set forth arguments, in accordance with your instructions, concerning Czechoslovakia and our intention of not acceding to any additional demands on the part of France. Finally I was able, during the course of the conversation, to make a statement in the sense of your telegram.<sup>4</sup> Mussolini stated the following views on the individual points:

He would certainly not deny that a certain easing of his position had taken place. On the other hand, the British had already . . . (group mutilated)<sup>5</sup> given him to understand that the German diversion made no difference to the situation as far as Italy was concerned; the Italians were not to imagine that they could now count on greater leniency on the part of Britain. Nor did he by any means consider that the danger of sanctions being intensified had been finally removed, for the impending negotiations would certainly be difficult; the idea was even coming up again that the Italians must first evacuate the occupied Abyssinian territory. With regard to our proposals for

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 18.

<sup>2</sup> A German-Italian agreement on the recognition and implementation of legal decisions in civil and commercial matters was signed in Rome on Mar. 9; for the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1937, Pt. II, pp. 145-150.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 26.

<sup>4</sup> In the draft of this document in the files of the German Embassy in Rome (M281/M011539-42) this sentence reads: "... in the sense of the last paragraph of your telegram."

<sup>5</sup> The text of the Rome draft (see footnote 4 above) is identical at this point with the text here printed.

security, he personally must remain of the opinion that we had offered too much; but apart from this there remained the fact that our sudden offer to return just at this moment had dealt a heavy blow at the Italian position. As regards future policy, and in reply to statements on my part concerning the reserve which we hoped Italy would maintain towards any action which the other Locarno Powers might take, Mussolini said that he had given Cerruti<sup>6</sup> the strictest instructions to remain purely receptive; this is in accord with what Suvich told me yesterday.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, he had made it quite clear to the British and French that any Italian action against Germany was out of the question, the more so since, in face of the attempts at strangulation on the part of the sanctionist Powers, Germany had been Italy's only loophole: a State to which sanctions had been applied would not apply sanctions to other States (*sanzionati non sanzionano altri*). Moreover, the British and French did not seem to expect Italy to do so. As far as the League of Nations was concerned, he wished only to express the heart-felt hope that, in the interests both of Italy and ultimately also of Germany, the latter would not in fact finally return to the League of Nations as long as the Abyssinian dispute remained so undecided that it might yet become necessary for Italy to announce her withdrawal. To this I replied that Germany's actual return was indeed a long way off. It might perhaps be appropriate to authorize me to give an assurance to this effect.

HASSELL.

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<sup>6</sup> Vittorio Cerruti, Italian Ambassador in France, who was to represent Italy at the meeting of the Locarno Powers in Paris (see Editors' Note, p. 77).

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 28.

## No. 42

6710/E506496

*The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 53 of March 9

WASHINGTON, March 9, 1936—10:47 p.m.

Received March 10—7:15 a.m.

II R 355.

In today's press conference the Secretary of State<sup>1</sup> said that, although he was keeping himself informed of events in Europe, he had no cause at all to concern himself with the Rhineland affair. To an enquiry about this he replied in confidence that no foreign Power had so far appealed to the American Government for support of any kind. According to confidential statements by high-ranking officials, the opinion, based on

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<sup>1</sup> Cordell Hull.

exhaustive reports from the American Missions in Europe, is held in the State Department that . . . (group missing) out of the question. The State Department's attitude to the German action continues to be friendly. It is felt that the German step was to have been expected, that it is indeed understandable, since, after all, it is German territory which is involved, and that it promises a pacification of the European atmosphere which would have been unthinkable as long as Germany had not obtained full sovereignty. A high-ranking official remarked that if America were in the same position as Germany she would naturally take the same course at the first opportunity that offered.

In Congress circles the reaction, with some exceptions, is in general also sympathetic. In all utterances by members of Congress the desire not to intervene in European affairs finds expression. They do not believe in a war either. A few senators are inclined to say that Germany is right and are speaking with some harshness of the Versailles Treaty, which, they say, should have been changed long ago. Elsewhere, too, the general attitude here has not altered, except that the remark that, from now on, Germany can no longer be trusted is more often heard. Those papers which are known to be basically hostile to us continue to attack us. They deplore London's clear intention of leaving Paris in the lurch, and welcome Italy's apparent intention of making use of the crisis to get out of the *cul-de-sac* in which she had landed as a result of the Abyssinian adventure.

LUTHER

## No. 43

5576/E400392-96

*The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich War Ministry  
(Copy to the Foreign Ministry)*

SECRET

LONDON, March 9, 1936.

Annex 1 to [Report] 10/36

Received March 10.

II M 888 g.

Subject: Militarization of the Rhineland.

This morning I was at the War Office in order to find out what the atmosphere was like.

In the Department dealing with Military Attachés I found the atmosphere to be not only chilly, but embittered. The conversation began, on the British side, with ironical thanks for the pleasant Sunday. I, for my part, then asked when I might introduce my assistant, who had just arrived, and was given the answer: "next week".

I then tried to find out whether the state of affairs would seem to



demand a discussion with General Dill.<sup>1</sup> The answer was in the negative, without any reasons being given. Here it may be said that I myself ascribe this refusal at this moment also to the attitude of General Dill, who wishes to avoid awkward questions.

The British side then informed me that all those who regard a treaty with Germany as pointless had now been strengthened in their opinion. We had once more decided in favour of the mailed fist. We could have had everything we wanted if we had begun by making our proposals and had then put forward our demands. Here I asked whether I was expected to believe that the French would ever have agreed of their own free will to the militarization of the Rhineland. At all the negotiations, I said, we had always found that in the end the British did not come to any decision after all. I also mentioned that the Chancellor had given clear warning beforehand and had said that he would abide by Locarno as long as the others did so too.

The reply to this was that Locarno had now been definitely broken; I interpolated "Yes, by the French." The reply to this was that even if this were the case, two wrongs did not make a right.

In view of this attitude I thought it right to go over to the offensive myself; I stated that in my opinion the "English frontier on the Rhine"<sup>2</sup> was incompatible with Locarno. I had watched and heard Mr. Baldwin read out his statement, and had realized that this phrase was deliberate. Thereupon it was objected that forty thousand men, and tanks as well, had marched in. I asked for an explanation as to how they arrived at this figure from nineteen battalions and thirteen batteries.

During the course of the conversation the first agitation died down a little and a number of questions were put to me. I gained the impression, partly as a result of a subsequent discussion with my naval colleague,<sup>3</sup> that the British point of view, and probably the questions as well, had been laid down in instructions, since, when stating this point of view, a piece of paper was consulted.

The first question was what was the object of proposing a mutual demilitarized zone, when it was well known that it would be out of the question for the French and the Belgians to give up their costly fortifications. To this I replied that I did not know how the authorities had got the idea of making this proposal. I myself had come across it for the first time in the book *Geographic Disarmament* by Marshall-Cornwall,<sup>4</sup> the former British Military Attaché in Berlin (for an

<sup>1</sup> Director of Military Operations and Intelligence in the British War Office.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to a speech by Baldwin in the House of Commons on July 30, 1934, during which he said: "When you think of the defence of England you no longer think of the chalk cliffs of Dover; you think of the Rhine. That is where our frontier lies." (See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 292, cols. 2325-2340.)

<sup>3</sup> Captain Wassner.

<sup>4</sup> Major General J. H. Marshall-Cornwall had been British Military Attaché in Berlin 1928-1932.

appreciation, see Annex 3 to Report 3/36).<sup>5</sup> It was, however, understandable, especially from the point of view of bringing home to world opinion the existing injustices.

It was then put to me that the whole affair had been planned some time ago, although the British Military Attaché in Berlin<sup>6</sup> had repeatedly been assured that we did not intend to march into the demilitarized zone. The British intelligence service possessed a fairly considerable amount of material on the preparations for it, and it did not come from French sources. It was, however, believed that the leading German military personages themselves, when giving the information, had not been aware of the existing purpose.

To this I replied that the final factor which had precipitated the decision must have been the ratification of the Franco-Russian Pact. Asked whether it had in fact been ratified, I countered by asking whether there was any doubt that ratification would be agreed upon, even in the Senate. To this I received no clear answer.

The question was then put to me as to whether conditions would be attached to our return to the League of Nations. I replied that in my personal opinion this would not be the case, and that as far as I knew the Ambassador had made a statement to this effect to the British Foreign Secretary.

In connection with this discussion I said that, after what I had been told, I could not hope that a further discussion would bring about a reconciliation of our two points of view.

*Conclusion:* It is not possible to form a judgement after seeing only *one* personality, even though a responsible one. I have, however, gained the definite impression that the reaction to the occupation of the Rhineland is very much more violent than was that which followed Germany's reassumption of military sovereignty. It is directed not so much against the militarization of the Rhineland as such, as against the *manner* of the German action.

In view of the understanding of the German problems which has so far been shown, especially by leading War Office personalities, the present development is unsatisfactory.

*At present* there are no indications that the man in the street has been noticeably affected by recent events.<sup>7</sup>

FHR. V. GEYR  
Major General

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (5576/E400379-84).

<sup>6</sup> Colonel F. E. Hotblack; see also vol. III of this Series, document No. 547.

<sup>7</sup> For another account by Geyr von Schweppenburg of this interview, see *The Critical Years* (London, 1952), pp. 60-61.

## No. 44

6144/E459836-37

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

A III 2 h

PRAGUE, March 9, 1936.

Received March 13.

II Ts. 550.

Subject: The morale of the Sudeten Germans.

With reference to your despatch II Ts. 451 of March 4.<sup>1</sup>

The Sudeten Germans live for the most part in the industrial frontier areas of Northern Bohemia which have been particularly severely hit by unemployment. Beneš has shown by his conduct of policy so far that he is fundamentally opposed to things German, and hostile to the Sudeten German community. It is, therefore, only a natural consequence that the morale of the Sudeten Germans, which was bad enough already by reason of the unemployment, should have deteriorated even further in consequence of Beneš' being elected State President. Whereas another President might at least have given rise to some hope that politically, or at least from the human angle, he would treat the Sudeten Germans with some understanding, this may be ruled out in Beneš' case. As for the order reported by the State Police office at Liegnitz,<sup>2</sup> I have learned in strict confidence from a reliable source that the Sudeten German Gymnastic Organization [*Turnerorganisation*], from which, as you know, the Sudeten German Party sprang, has given instructions to its confidential agents as to how they are to conduct themselves should disturbances occur. It should already be clear from the overall picture given in previous reports from here that the desperate economic and political situation of the Sudeten German community entails a risk of explosions. It is in fact amazing how calmly the Sudeten German community has so far borne its economic misery and political bondage.

There is no reliable information here as to what arms are held.

EISENLOHR

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6144/E459831-33); this forwarded for information, investigation and report a Prussian Secret State Police circular of Feb. 27 on the morale of the Sudeten Germans, which reads: "Since the election of the former Foreign Minister, Beneš, as President of the Czechoslovak Republic, a mood of extreme depression and almost of despair has spread among the Sudeten Germans, because it is generally expected that the Sudeten German community will be even more ruthlessly treated and that the already collapsing Sudeten German economy will regress still further. In this connection the State Police office in Liegnitz have learnt from an allegedly reliable source that officials of the Sudeten German Party have orders, in the event of any sort of disturbance, to alert all Sudeten Germans at once. Arms are said to be available in sufficient quantities."

<sup>2</sup> See footnote 1 above.

## No. 45

M281/M011533-36

*Ambassador Hassell to Foreign Minister Neurath*

ROME, March 9, 1936.

DEAR NEURATH: In my telegram of the day before yesterday<sup>1</sup> I reproduced the main substance of my conversation with Mussolini. As I had telegraphic instructions<sup>2</sup> to ensure the carrying out of a *démarche* "in the Foreign Ministry" on Saturday morning, I had made an appointment to see Suvich; the conversation had been fixed for 10:30 a.m. Having received and read the despatch<sup>3</sup> (which contained instructions for a conversation with Mussolini) after midnight on the night of Friday to Saturday, I tried, the following morning, to see Mussolini in person straight away, and this I succeeded in doing within half an hour, immediately before the session of the Council of Ministers. Had I not managed to do so, the reply to the Geneva appeal<sup>4</sup> would have been decided upon in ignorance of our readiness [to rejoin] the League of Nations, i.e., with the threat of withdrawing from the League behind it. The psychological effect of our communication to Mussolini at this critical moment for Italy was extraordinary, but it might have been "catastrophic" in the true sense of the word if he had received it an hour later. Our usual confidant has meanwhile, of his own accord, confirmed my impression in this respect.

After our expressly consulting Mussolini on the whole affair and his telling us that he would react to any intensification of sanctions by withdrawing,<sup>5</sup> Mussolini must have found it very hard that, at the moment when he was preparing to reply to Geneva by threatening to react with a withdrawal, we for our part should bring up the prospect of our entry [into the League], and thereby, in Mussolini's words, take the edge off his weapons. We could doubtless have very much reduced this effect and caused Italy to view our "diversionary offensive" in a quite different light if we had only informed Mussolini even half a day earlier and, for example, assured him that—once in the League of Nations—our whole weight would be thrown in the scales against sanctions.

In the meantime I have had a conversation with Suvich, about which I telegraphed yesterday evening.<sup>6</sup> I am convinced that the effect on the Palazzo Chigi of our willingness to return [to the League] has been

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 3.

<sup>4</sup> For the Geneva appeal see document No. 1, footnote 1; for the Italian reply see document No. 28, footnote 8.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 579.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 28.



quite different from that on Mussolini. Whilst the latter is animated by the desire to finish the job and not to let himself be put off even by dangerous obstacles, and has understanding for the solidarity of the two regimes and for the goal of the independence of the "have nots" *vis-à-vis* the "haves",<sup>7</sup> the [Palazzo] Chigi on the other hand welcomes everything that might strengthen Italy's shaky connections with the League of Nations and which is apt to recreate something like Stresa.<sup>8</sup> This school of thought has now got the upper hand, and France's hope of putting Italy once more in her debt by means of a peaceful settlement of the Abyssinian conflict has been revived. Even if, before our communication, the tendency to make as conciliatory a reply as possible to Geneva had already gathered strength as a result of French pressure, this by no means alters this assessment: in any case we have provided this school of thought with a splendid alibi.

I cannot judge from here what reasons of general policy were decisive in causing the peace guarantees mentioned by the Führer in his conversations with me<sup>9</sup> to be supplemented by the offer to rejoin the League of Nations, which was not discussed at all at that time; presumably it was out of consideration for Britain. But in any case one must be quite clear about the repercussions on Mussolini. It was clear from everything that the Führer said that he considers it to be of decisive importance that Italy and Fascism should remain intact, and that the two Powers having similar regimes should work together within the limits of what is feasible. If this is desired, then every effort will have to be made to eradicate the impression which has been left by our action, so that Mussolini's own inclinations may again prevail against the [Palazzo] Chigi's Western leanings.

Closing formula in handwriting.<sup>10</sup>

HASELL

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<sup>7</sup> The words in quotation marks are in English in the original.

<sup>8</sup> The British and French Prime Ministers and Foreign Ministers met with Mussolini at Stresa, Apr. 11-14, 1935; for the texts of the Joint Resolution of the Stresa Conference, and of the Anglo-Italian and Final Declarations, of Apr. 14, see *British and Foreign State Papers* (London, H.M. Stationery Office, *in progress*) (hereinafter cited as *B.F.S.P.*), vol. 139, pp. 756-758. See also vol. IV of this Series, *passim*.

<sup>9</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 506, 564 and 575.

<sup>10</sup> The document here printed, which is a draft, is marked: "Despatched by special courier on Mar. 9."

## No. 46

7790/E562320-23

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

[LONDON,] March 9, 1936.

Mar. No. 255

Received March 10.

The Ambassador is informed.

SK 45 g.

[II M 898 g.]<sup>1</sup>

Subject: The Naval Conference.

The German Ambassador having already acquainted Mr. Eden on the morning of March 7 with the German attitude<sup>2</sup> towards the wishes put forward by the British (see Mar. No. 248)<sup>3</sup> concerning the possibility of a special Anglo-German agreement—information which Mr. Eden greeted with particular pleasure—I today once more brought up, as agreed with Mr. Craigie, the question of these German replies, and discussed them with Mr. Craigie.

Our discussion covered the following points:

1) The German Government were in agreement with the formula proposed by the British for class age-limits.

2) In view of the "Safeguarding Clause"<sup>4</sup> proposed by the other side, the German Government agreed to a signature beforehand, but must<sup>5</sup> make the final entry into force of the treaty dependent upon the signing of a similar Russo-British pact.

3) The new treaty to come into force on January 1, 1937.<sup>6</sup>

4) Six years is proposed as a desirable duration.

5) An exchange of Notes is regarded as sufficient for the agreement.

6) The communication of a definitive draft for a statement of views is envisaged.

With regard to point (1), Mr. Craigie stated that:

The British intended to fix the formula for class age-limits in such a way that it would to some extent still be a special arrangement within the framework of, and as a follow-up to, the German-British Treaty of June 18, 1935,<sup>7</sup> as had previously been the case for all other special arrangements in connection with this Treaty.

<sup>1</sup> Supplied from the copy received in the Foreign Ministry (2067/449256-59).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 10; for Hoesch's report on this conversation see document No. 21.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "SK.40 geh"; this was the registry number of the Navy's copy (7790/E562305-14) of London Embassy report A 957 of Mar. 4 (vol. iv of this Series, document No. 605), which was evidently identical with Mar. No. 248.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>5</sup> A marginal note in Guse's handwriting gives an alternative version for insertion here: "reserve the right to withdraw from the treaty, if . . ." (This reservation should not be included in the treaty itself.)"

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note, marked with an asterisk to indicate that it originated with the C. in C.: "Valid only for ships launched after December 31, 1936!!"

<sup>7</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 156.

With regard to point (2), Mr. Craigie stated that:

One result of the condition that the treaty should come into force only after the signing of the Russo-British pact would be that the Russians could make considerable difficulties about concluding a treaty at all, and could use this condition to bring pressure to bear in order to obtain special conditions for themselves. There was also a danger that, as a result of this measure, the Italians, too, might make conditions about the inclusion beforehand of Turks, Spaniards or the like, so that insistence on this condition might, in fact, render the realization of any treaty at all a matter of doubt.

He once again drew attention to the "Safeguarding Clause",<sup>4</sup> which gave us the fullest possible opportunity of taking Russian questions into account.

At this point Mr. Craigie asked whether, in the light of what he had said, we would be prepared to alter our condition as set forth under (2).<sup>8</sup>

With regard to point (5) he stated that he naturally understood our view that an exchange of Notes would suffice for an agreement, but we would, he was sure, raise no objections if perhaps some other way of concluding it were eventually found. In this connection he particularly emphasized that it was very difficult to conclude an agreement and not a treaty between three or more Powers.

With regard to the participation of the Russians in the present negotiations, Mr. Craigie gave me the following information:

Contact had so far only been made with the Russians in order to obtain their views as to whether they wished to participate officially in the negotiations at all. In addition, they had received all the data for the discussions, exactly as we Germans had received them. In reply to a further question (in the sense of the Foreign Ministry telegram No. 35 of March 7)<sup>9</sup> Mr. Craigie stated that it was intended to negotiate with the Russians on the question of qualitative limitations only and not to discuss quantitative limitations at all.

Mr. Craigie said he was grateful for the extensive cooperation, which he could not fail to observe in the communication of the above German decisions, and he expressed particular pleasure over this settlement.

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note, marked with an asterisk to indicate that it originated with the C. in C.: "No."

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (7599/E541973). This telegram repeated the substance of Rome Embassy telegram No. 23 of Mar. 6 (2067/449253) which reads: "I hear from a source which is generally well informed that Britain, according to a report from the Italian Ambassador in Moscow, is prepared to concede a higher percentage ratio to Russia during the current Anglo-Russian naval negotiations than to Germany." In telegram No. 45 of Mar. 8 (7790/E562257) the German Naval Attaché in Moscow reported: "The Italian Military Attaché informs me that, in reply to an enquiry, a junior colonel in the Defence Commissariat stated that during the Soviet Russian-British naval negotiations a higher percentage ratio was being considered for the Soviet Union than for Germany, namely, as far as the Attaché remembers, 49 to 42 per cent. A senior officer in the Defence Commissariat, however, denied that any negotiations were taking place at all."

In view of the developments which had been taking place in the political situation since Saturday, Mr. Craigie expressed doubts as to whether the full Naval Conference would continue to function at all, and particularly whether a German-British agreement would ever come into being, or even whether the German-British agreement of the summer of 1935 could be expected to continue in existence. He stressed that this statement, which formed part of his observations on wider political issues, all of them inspired by feelings of friendship towards Germany, was the outcome of his own personal reflections.

WASSNER

## No. 47

6710/E506516-18

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 38 of March 9

LONDON, March 10, 1936.

Received March 10—6:10 p.m.

II R 362.

I had a long conversation today with Sir Austen Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> and Lord Cecil,<sup>2</sup> whose attitude in the present crisis is of particular importance. They both regard the situation as serious.

Particularly Sir Austen Chamberlain, whose influence on the Government's decisions is well known, was very worried and at the same time embittered. I explained to him, as I afterwards did to Lord Cecil, our view that, by means of the Soviet Pact, France had destroyed Locarno, that it was therefore not *we* who were treaty-breakers, and that our proposal was intended to revive and even expand the Locarno concept in a form suited to the new situation. I then drew attention to the importance of our offers and expressed the hope that the Western Powers would not let slip unavailed the opportunity of constructing a comprehensive security system.

Sir Austen Chamberlain did not go into the question of the compatibility of the Soviet Pact with Locarno, but based his whole argument on the contention that, under the Locarno Treaty, it had been our duty to seek arbitration. He reproached Germany with having pronounced judgement in her own case and having committed a brutal breach of treaty. From this he drew the conclusion that the effect of the German offers must be impaired by doubt as to whether Germany would fulfil future undertakings.

<sup>1</sup> British Conservative and Unionist M.P.; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs 1925-1929.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 33, footnote 1.



After a heated discussion on these questions, Sir Austen went on to assess the acute situation which had been created. He emphasized that the entry of large contingents of troops into the demilitarized zone had created the situation which, at Locarno, his side had envisaged as a flagrant breach of Articles 42 and 43<sup>3</sup> and as an act of unprovoked aggression. Sir Austen would not allow my vigorous contradiction (based on the Locarno provisions) of this assertion or my statement that at the most it was only Article 4, Section 1 of the Rhine Pact<sup>4</sup> which was involved. He kept repeating that an act of aggression had in fact occurred and that it was for France to decide whether she wished to reply by force of arms. He twice repeated, raising his voice, that however much he might wish to see such a development avoided, he would nonetheless think Britain dishonoured if, in the event of French action in reply to the act of aggression committed by Germany, she did not support France with the whole of her fighting forces.

I think that I finally managed, in the course of a heated discussion, at least to bring home to him the danger and, at the same time, the error of his views. At any rate, when we parted, he spoke in somewhat calmer terms of the understandable agitation which the German action had caused him, precisely because he had himself been one of the signatories of Locarno.

Lord Cecil, too, left open the question as to whether we were right in asserting that Locarno had been violated by the Soviet Pact. But he too regretted the form which the German denunciation had taken. He explained that a security system could only be effective if the treaties on which it was based were unconditionally adhered to by the signatories, with the proviso that, in the event of an alleged breach, the matter was submitted to arbitration. In the given circumstances he could not see how the British Government could do other than loyally fulfil their obligations under the terms of Locarno and the League of Nations. He therefore thought that a practicable way to the solution of the crisis would only be found if, even at this stage, the question as to who was the treaty-breaker was decided by arbitration.

In face of this I stressed the German view that, through the Soviet Pact, whose individual clauses I quoted and stigmatized, Locarno had been invalidated and that therefore arbitration no longer entered into the question.

In these circumstances, Lord Cecil said, he could not see how our proposals, which he acknowledged to be intrinsically important, could at present be practically followed up.

In reply to this I reminded him in bitter words of the many opportunities which had been let slip, and to which perhaps another lost

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles; see Editors' Note, p. 1.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*

opportunity would now be added. Lord Cecil admitted that our opponents had made many mistakes, but maintained that, without doing away with the now general habit of pronouncing judgement in one's own case, the constructive work for peace, which he was always prepared to serve, would be difficult to perform.

In contrast to Sir Austen Chamberlain, Lord Cecil did not consider that an act of aggression which would justify immediate military counter-action had in fact occurred. He thought, rather, that the decision now rested with the League of Nations.

It emerged from both conversations that the important influence which the two personages concerned wield will not be exerted towards an easing of the situation.

HOESCH

[EDITORS' NOTE: Representatives of the Locarno Powers other than Germany, i.e., Britain, France, Belgium and Italy, met in Paris on March 10. After two sessions, one in the morning and one in the evening, it was decided to resume discussions in London on March 12. For the text of the communiqués issued after the two sessions see *Le Temps* of March 11 and March 12.

On the same day, the British representative on the Council of the League of Nations requested that the meeting of the Council planned for March 13 in Geneva should be postponed until March 14 and be held in London. The text of a telegram informing members of the League Council of this request was communicated by Avenol to the German Government in a telegram of March 10 (6710/E506583); in a telegram of March 11 (6710/E506717) he confirmed that the Council would meet in London on March 14.

Also on the same day, statements were made on the German and French positions. In an interview given to George Ward Price, European correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, Hitler confirmed that his offer of non-aggression pacts to all Germany's neighbours included Austria and Czechoslovakia. For the text of this interview, which was released by the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro on March 11 (63/43720-23) and appeared in the *Daily Mail* on the same day, see Royal Institute of International Affairs: *Documents on International Affairs, 1936* (London, 1937), pp. 57-61. For the French statement see document No. 28, footnote 6.]

## No. 48

4619/E198272-73

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

RM 208.

The Yugoslav Minister<sup>1</sup> called on me this morning on his return from Belgrade and, on instructions from Prince Regent Paul, gave me the following information:

(1) Yugoslavia's attitude towards Russia remained, as before, negative.

(2) Hodža's visit had,<sup>2</sup> as would indeed have been reported to me meanwhile by Minister Heeren,<sup>3</sup> had no political results, whilst the experts were at the moment racking their brains over the economic questions.

The Minister then asked whether our actions of the last few days had been previously agreed upon with Mussolini, since this would be of great interest to his Government. I replied that nothing whatsoever had been agreed upon with Mussolini, who had been just as surprised as the other Powers at our step and had at first regarded it as being directed against Italy, because our declaration that we were prepared to return to the League of Nations had robbed him of the political weapon he had hitherto possessed, namely, the threat that he would leave the League of Nations and withdraw from Locarno. That Italy's position in both the military and the political spheres had been eased by our action could, however, not be denied.

On the Minister's further asking whether our offer of a non-aggression pact to the Eastern States also applied to Austria, I replied that there had been no reason to include Austria in this offer. The only reason for repeating the offer, which had already been previously made, to conclude pacts of non-aggression with our Eastern neighbours had been that in the Führer's last declaration Lithuania had been expressly excluded.<sup>4</sup>

The Minister finally turned to the impending deliberations of the Council of the League of Nations on our case and asked what resolutions the Locarno Powers were likely to put forward in Geneva. I replied that at present I did not know. The Minister then went on to say that he much hoped that no economic sanctions were being envisaged;

<sup>1</sup> Aleksander Cincar-Marković.

<sup>2</sup> The Czechoslovak Minister President visited Belgrade Feb. 22-24, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Heeren reported on Hodža's visit in telegrams Nos. 10 of Feb. 25 (9360/E663200) and 13 of Mar. 1 (9360/E663201), and in Report No. 538 Po. 3 Oe. of Feb. 28 (9360/63205-11).

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

Yugoslavia, he said, was already suffering quite enough as a result of the sanctions imposed on Italy. I suggested to the Minister that, if his Government had not already taken the opportunity of drawing the attention of the representatives of the Little Entente to the dangers, as they saw them, of further sanctions, then he should do so himself. Otherwise it looked as though M. Titulescu would accept the French proposals with flying colours.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

## No. 49

7849/E569594

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

RM 210.

II Ung. 199.

The Yugoslav Minister this morning came to speak, amongst other matters, of the Hungarian-Yugoslav *rapprochement* which I had previously mentioned.<sup>1</sup> He said that Minister President Stojadinović too considered that such a *rapprochement* would be useful. He was doubtful, however, whether it would be possible to reach an understanding with Hungary as long as Foreign Minister de Kánya, who was known to be anti-Serb, remained in office.

In reply I told M. Marković that I had learned that M. de Kánya too desired a Hungarian-Yugoslav *rapprochement*.<sup>2</sup>

The Minister then said that one of the main obstacles to an understanding was the agitation amongst the Yugoslav refugees which had still not been suppressed by the Hungarian Government. Nevertheless, Belgrade was willing to discuss the possibility of a *rapprochement* with Hungary.

V. NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> No record of such a conversation has been found; see also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 550.

<sup>2</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 576.

## No. 50

3212/712451

### *Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 10, 1936—1 p.m.

Ambassador von Hoesch has just telephoned and has informed me that on the whole the British press is pursuing the same lines as yesterday, but he warned against drawing over-optimistic conclusions from this attitude and from the relatively favourable course of



yesterday's debate in the House of Commons. Opinion in Parliament and the press was in part more favourable than that of persons in authority, who felt themselves committed in many respects; Herr von Hoesch will be writing a report on this subject this afternoon.<sup>1</sup>

Herr von Hoesch further stated that he was constantly being asked (cf. also Austen Chamberlain's questions yesterday in the House of Commons)<sup>2</sup> why Germany's proposals for non-aggression pacts were addressed to the Eastern and Western States only, while no mention was made of Austria and Switzerland. It was difficult for him to answer these questions. I reminded him of Switzerland's special position, in consequence of her neutrality, and said that Austria was in the same position as Denmark. We saw no necessity for a special non-aggression pact in these two cases. Herr von Hoesch said that nobody had mentioned Denmark, but that the problem of a possible German attack on Austria was much in people's thoughts.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 66.

<sup>2</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 309, col. 1813.

## No. 51

6710/E506565-66

### *The Acting Consul at Geneva<sup>1</sup> to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 16 of March 10

GENEVA, March 10, 1936—3:40 p.m.

Received March 10—4:15 p.m.

II R 370.

1) On instructions from his Government, the Italian representative<sup>2</sup> here tried to ascertain from me whether Germany would let herself be represented in the [League] Council. Reminding me of Italy's experiences, he emphatically advised us to be present for discussions in the Council. During the further course of the conversation he said that it was to a certain extent a matter of course that unilateral action on the part of Germany should result in a condemnatory resolution by the Council, but this did not exclude the possibility of the same resolution already envisaging negotiations. In reply to a question by me, the Italian representative did not deny that it was possible that Italy would associate herself with a condemnatory resolution, but thought that Italy could naturally not vote in favour of any more extensive measures such as sanctions.

2) As I have heard in strict confidence, the Secretary General's

<sup>1</sup> Counsellor Schmieden, an official of Department II, acted as Consul at Geneva Mar. 9-16, 1936, during the illness of Consul Krauel.

<sup>2</sup> Bova Scoppa.

French *Chef de Cabinet*<sup>3</sup> is saying that France, following the example of Britain in the Mediterranean, will, at all events, proceed to partial mobilization. It was indicated to me that, in regard to such action, French politicians appeared to be influenced by the consideration that, for all it need not necessarily come to war, yet a "positive parity" would to some extent be achieved, since Germany would not withdraw troops from the Rhineland. If it should come to negotiations with Germany after all, the French partial mobilization would meanwhile continue during these negotiations.

3) In other French circles, though they are not responsible ones, and in a certain journalistic clique which is strongly influenced by the former German journalist Max Beer, they are talking quite openly about war. The alleged opinion of the French General Staff, that the Maginot Line is worthless if the Rhineland zone is occupied by Germany, is much used as an argument.

4) In contrast to the French view, Geneva circles are noticeably much influenced by their strongly anti-Bolshevist attitude and the resultant sympathy with the German line of argument. The *Journal de Genève* and *La Suisse* have published two articles remarkable for this country, "Reconstruire" and "La dernière chance", which advocate that the German proposals be subjected to serious study. In private conversations, however, one encounters great scepticism as to how far the German proposals are sincere. A similar attitude obtains among British League of Nations circles here. If we are to make use of what is favourable to us in this attitude, we can only do so if we can emphasize here, as the crowning feature of the whole proposed complex of treaties, our readiness to return to the League of Nations.

SCHMIEDEN

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<sup>3</sup> M. M. Hoden.

## No. 52

6710/E506616

### *The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 54 of March 10

BERNE, March 10, 1936—6:40 p.m.

Received March 10—8:25 p.m.

II R 393.

The Swiss press today unanimously affirms that Switzerland is not obliged to take part in any sanctions imposed on a violator of the Locarno Pact. Motta's deputy, Minister Bonna,<sup>1</sup> confirmed to me

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<sup>1</sup> Pierre Bonna, Head of Division in the Federal Political Department.

the semi-official nature of this statement, which, moreover, applied to all non-participants in the Locarno Pact. The well-known League of Nations resolution to the opposite effect of April 17, 1935,<sup>2</sup> could, of course, be disputed and was not acknowledged by Switzerland.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 65.

## No. 53

6710/E506615

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 20 of March 10

BUCHAREST, March 10, 1936—7:15 p.m.

Received March 10—9:10 p.m.

II R 392.

According to trustworthy information, the Crown Council at its yesterday's session decided to keep the three divisions in Timișoara, Cluj and Oradea in a state of constant alert. The Minister of Railways<sup>1</sup> has received instructions to speed up the working out of plans for transporting war materials from Russia to the Hungarian-Polish frontier [*sic*].

POCHHAMMER

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<sup>1</sup> R. Franasovici, Minister of Communications.

## No. 54

6710/E506540

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 31 of March 10

BERLIN, March 10, 1936—8:00 p.m.

e.o. II R 366.

With reference to your telegram No. 29 of March 9.<sup>1</sup>

I am in agreement with your simply pointing out that Germany's actual return to the League of Nations is probably still a thing of the distant future, but I do not think it desirable that you should commit us on this point. You should therefore not go beyond what you have said so far and you should refrain from giving Mussolini any assurances.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 41.

## No. 55

8911/E622075

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 20 of March 10

PRAGUE, March 10, 1936—8:20 p.m.

Received March 10—10:00 p.m.

II Ts. 547.

Minister Mástný,<sup>1</sup> who called on me today after having seen the President,<sup>2</sup> the Minister President<sup>3</sup> and the Foreign Minister<sup>4</sup> here, expressed anxiety and doubt, as did today's morning press, as to whether the Führer and Chancellor's offer to conclude non-aggression pacts with his Eastern neighbours also applied to Czechoslovakia. When I replied that this was, in my view, clear from the wording of Point 1 of the proposals,<sup>5</sup> he asked almost agitatedly whether he might regard this interpretation as official, to which I was obliged to reply in the negative.

I would request immediate telegraphic instructions on the authentic clarification of the question, to which, it appears, the Czechs are attributing decisive importance for the assessment of the German proposals as a whole, particularly as the omission of Czechoslovakia in the Führer's speech,<sup>6</sup> in which Poland and France were mentioned as established national States, seems to have caused some anxiety here.<sup>7</sup>

EISENLOHR

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Vojčák Mástný, Czechoslovak Minister in Berlin; according to a letter from Renthe-Fink to Eisenlohr, dated Mar. 5 (8911/E622074), Mástný had informed him the previous day of his impending visit to Prague and of his intention of calling on Eisenlohr.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Edouard Beneš.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Milan Hodža.

<sup>4</sup> Dr. K. Krofta.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

<sup>7</sup> In despatch II Ts. 547 of Mar. 12 (8911/E622076). Dieckhoff informed the Legation in Czechoslovakia that Hitler's interview with Ward Price (see Editors' Note, p. 77), had disposed of Mástný's question and that any further initiative in the matter would be left to the Czechoslovak Government, and instructed the Legation to take no further action in the matter.



## No. 56

6710/E506610

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 23 of March 10

BELGRADE, March 10, 1936—8:30 p.m.

Received March 10—11:30 p.m.

II R 390.

I hear from a reliable source that, at a discussion within the Foreign Ministry, the Minister President<sup>1</sup> took the view that Yugoslavia would in no circumstances join in economic sanctions against Germany. A suggestion by Krofta that the Council of the Little Entente should meet at once was turned down by the Minister President, as the current Chairman, on the grounds that the Little Entente was not directly interested in Locarno.

Cincar-Marković informs me that François-Poncet told him that the position was a very difficult one for France since economic sanctions against Germany were scarcely feasible; unlike Italy, Britain seemed to have known about the German step beforehand, but it was hoped in Paris that Britain would support them in demanding that, before negotiations began, at least some of the troops which had moved into the Rhineland should leave again.

HEEREN

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<sup>1</sup> Dr. Milan Stojadinović; in telegram No. 17 of Mar. 7 (6710/E506306) Heeren reported that he had communicated the German Memorandum to Stojadinović, who made no comment.

## No. 57

6710/E506601-02

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 8 of March 10

BRUSSELS, March 10, 1936—8:35 p.m.

Received March 10—11:30 p.m.

II R 385.

With reference to my instruction [*sic*—telegram] No. 7 of March 8.<sup>1</sup> Fostered by the Belgian Government's attitude, a calmer view of the German measures of March 7 is beginning to prevail among the population and in the press. Only a few chauvinist francophile papers and the

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 27.

socialist *Peuple* continue to demand sharper measures against Germany and the rejection of the German proposals.

Sarraut's statement<sup>2</sup> has made the most unfavourable impression possible on Government circles and has strengthened the tendency to oppose unconditional and collective action in conjunction with France. The Belgian Government emphatically differentiate their action from that of France—no aggressive pettinesses and communiqués, no military measures (as the semi-official statements emphasize), and the unpolemical text of the Note to the League of Nations;<sup>2</sup> it is for this reason that the statement which the Government have just made<sup>3</sup> is confined to setting forth the facts, quoting Eden's speech<sup>4</sup> on the maintenance of the British guarantee, making general remarks about the value of treaties, and advocating calmness and firmness. The Belgian Government are indeed impelled to adopt this attitude if only by all the views of Flemish circles in the next few years<sup>5</sup> [*sic*—? amongst whom] the events of the last few days have revived the "Away from France" movement and the campaign against the Franco-Belgian military agreement.

The view, on which I have already reported,<sup>6</sup> that Belgium should model her attitude on the British example or on British advice, is gaining ground and is held almost everywhere; this is why Eden's speech was closely followed and much quoted; the following points from it are especially emphasized:

- 1) No danger of a German attack,
- 2) British guarantee for Belgium and France,
- 3) Need to study the German proposals.

Moreover, the opinion is constantly expressed by official circles that Belgium is the innocent victim of circumstances, and there is occasionally an undertone of reproach where France is concerned.

BRÄUER

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> M. Vandervelde, Minister without Portfolio, made a statement in the Belgian Chamber of Representatives on Mar. 10, summarizing the diplomatic events following upon the German occupation of the demilitarized zone; for the text see *Le Soir* of Mar. 11, 1936.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 56.

<sup>5</sup> This passage would appear to have been garbled in transmission.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 27.

## No. 58

6710/E506563

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 139 of March 10

PARIS, March 10, 1936—[9:15 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

Received March 10—10:30 p.m.

II R 369.

I hear from a reliable source that when, during the morning meeting of the representatives of the Locarno Powers,<sup>2</sup> the British brought up for debate the possibility of negotiating on the German proposals, Sarraut flatly refused any discussion on this subject. When the British asked whether the French Government had considered the consequences of such an attitude, Sarraut is said to have replied that France was prepared to draw all the necessary conclusions, within the framework of the League of Nations.

FORSTER

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<sup>1</sup> The time of despatch is taken from the draft in the Paris Embassy files (M287/M012028).

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

## No. 59

6710/E506574

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 61 of March 10

TOKYO, March 10, 1936—10:00 p.m.

Received March 10—2:45 p.m.

II R 375.

The attitude of the Japanese press to the Führer's speech in the Reichstag<sup>1</sup> and to the recent German actions is, on the whole, characterized by a sympathetic matter-of-factness. Without going into legalistic subtleties, the press here proceeds from the altered political situation arising from the Russo-French Pact, admits that the Pact is clearly in contradiction to the spirit of Locarno, and emphasizes that the German action is, politically speaking, logical, and that the Führer's proposals could represent a valuable starting-point for establishing European peace anew on the basis of the altered political circumstances.

Although the purely European character of the present dispute is emphasized, there is a persistent undertone of anxiety here regarding

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

the undeniable danger, which has not been removed by the French assurances, of the Franco-Russian Pact having repercussions on Russia's Far East policy.

During my conversation with him today, Minister Shigemitsu,<sup>2</sup> too, took up this point; he expressed profound anxiety lest Eastern Asia be affected by the Russo-French Pact, and he also took a very serious view of the recent attempts to draw Britain into the Franco-Russian camp.

Yesterday's official comment by a spokesman here on the present happenings in Europe advocates that, for the present, a policy of strict non-intervention in a purely European matter should be pursued (cf. DNB telegrams Nos. 174, 175 and 176).<sup>3</sup>

DIRKSEN

<sup>2</sup> Japanese Vice Minister for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

## No. 60

6710/E506568

### *The Acting Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 17 of March 10

GENEVA, March 10, 1936—10:30 p.m.

Received March 10—11:30 p.m.

II R 371.

With reference to my telegram No. 16 of March 10.<sup>1</sup>

1) Like the Italian representative,<sup>2</sup> Velics,<sup>3</sup> the Hungarian Minister . . . (group mutilated) takes the view that a Council resolution condemning the German step is inevitable, but he does not think that France will be able to achieve any further anti-German collective resolutions by the Council of the League of Nations. Velics said he thought that the Council's resolution could be couched in extenuating circumstances forms [*sic*] if a German delegation were to be present at the deliberations of the Council. Italy too would associate herself with a condemnatory resolution by the Council, as she was, now as previously, dependent on French support and British concessions for a compromise solution of the Abyssinian conflict.

2) Komarnicki<sup>4</sup> said he thought that Poland, not being a party to the Locarno Treaty, would maintain the strictest reserve and would wait and see whether the Locarno Powers were going to take up a unanimous standpoint. The Polish representative expects the meeting of the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 51.

<sup>2</sup> Bova Scoppa.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. László de Velics, Hungarian Minister in Switzerland and permanent delegate to the League of Nations.

<sup>4</sup> Tytus Komarnicki, permanent Polish delegate to the League of Nations.



Council to last eight to ten days. The Abyssinian conflict will continue to play a very important part in the negotiations, since Britain is much more interested in the Abyssinian question than in the Rhineland zone demilitarization provisions. Komarnicki believes that Britain's firm attitude towards Italy will not change, and he expects violent Anglo-French clashes even in the Committee of Thirteen,<sup>5</sup> which might have a considerable effect on the course of the meeting as a whole.

SCHMIEDEN

<sup>5</sup> The Committee of Thirteen was originally due to meet on Mar. 10 (see also document No. 1, footnote 1); after various postponements it eventually reassembled in London on Mar. 23.

## No. 61

6710/E506585-88

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram *en clair*<sup>1</sup>

No. 11 of March 10

WARSAW, March 10, 1936.

Received March 11—8:45 a.m.

II R 380.

Today, on the basis of your telegram No. 14 of March 8,<sup>2</sup> I once more set forth the German point of view in detail to Foreign Minister Beck, who leaves for Geneva tomorrow.

M. Beck was again reserved today and was clearly concerned not to commit himself. He stated that he could as yet have no idea of how things would turn out in Geneva, since Poland was not directly interested in the questions which had been raised in the Memorandum. With regard to the legal side of the conflict, he must, unfortunately, say that he thought our position was bad. He did not, however, think that there would be any question of sanctions, for which there could hardly be any juridical grounds. With regard to the political side, he acknowledged the value of the constructive ideas in the Memorandum. Poland, he said, had been the first country to show understanding of the Führer's peace policy and to prove this by practical cooperation. As a result, the Polish Government had no unfriendly feelings towards Germany in the present conflict either. His role in Geneva would not be to worsen or embitter the situation any further. Furthermore, he would, in view of his well-known attitude towards the second and third Internationals, oppose any influence directed against the regime in Germany which might make itself felt from that side. He would, in any case, be glad if he could have an opportunity of cooperating

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note on another copy (6710/E506589-91): "Received by courier at 8:45 a.m. on Mar. 11."

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (6710/E506279-87); this telegram provided information, on the basis of documents Nos. 14, 15 and 16, on the reception accorded the German *démarche* in Prague, Brussels and the Hague.

in organizing a true peace. He could not yet say in which sense he might work; he must first get his bearings on the spot.

M. Beck then drew my attention to the objective and, on the whole, positive, attitude of the Polish press, and asked whether this uniform attitude had not been to our satisfaction. I replied in the affirmative, but added that for two days now a certain nervousness had been felt by the press representatives here because of the report, which had first been put out by Reuter and then confirmed by Havas,<sup>3</sup> that Poland had declared to the French Government that she would fulfil her alliance obligations.<sup>4</sup> M. Beck replied that this Alliance existed, that it had been recognized in the German-Polish Agreement,<sup>5</sup> and that the Führer and Chancellor had explicitly referred to it in his latest speech. When Poland said that she would fulfil the obligations arising from this Alliance, she was merely stating the obvious, just as Eden had just made similar statements with regard to France. There was however not the slightest reason for any disquiet on this score. The Alliance was of a purely defensive nature, and since he had not gained the impression from the Führer's speech that it was Germany's intention to attack France, this statement was, in practice, without effect. Moreover, he could assure me that far more nervousness over the attitude of the Polish press and especially the semi-official commentaries was being felt by the French.

Count Szembek, whom I saw this morning, also remarked, of his own accord and without my touching on the subject, that Poland had certain obligations, but that he did not see how she could play any part at all in this particular case. He expressed himself even more clearly to another diplomat, saying that there was no *casus foederis*, since the Treaty would only come into play if French territory were attacked. On the whole Count Szembek has spoken to me and to other diplomats as well with less reserve than has the Foreign Minister. He emphasized that the Führer's speech had had an extremely favourable effect here, that there could be no question of sanctions, since there were no juridical grounds, nor was there any inclination on the part of the other States, and that M. Beck was going to Geneva with the best intentions.<sup>6</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 67.

<sup>4</sup> For the text of the Political Agreement between France and Poland, signed at Paris, Feb. 19, 1921, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xviii, pp. 11-13. This Agreement was supplemented by a secret Franco-Polish military agreement, signed on Feb. 21, 1921; for a summary of the terms and subsequent adjustments see Général Gamelin: *Servir* (Paris, 1946), vol. II, pp. 466-467; see also *Polskie Siły Zbrojne w Drugiej Wojnie Światowej* (Polish Armed Forces in the Second World War), published by the General Sikorski Historical Institute in London, 1951, vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 87-88. For the text of the Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between France and Poland, done at Locarno, Oct. 16, 1925, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LIV, pp. 353-357.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>6</sup> See also Szembek: *Journal*, p. 169.

## No. 62

9172/E645329-30

*A Deputy Director of Department II to the Embassy in Poland*

Cipher Letter

IV Po. 1779 Ang. II

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

Received March 11—1 p.m.

V III 3a.

For your information:

The corridor negotiations<sup>1</sup> have been temporarily broken off because, although Sokolowski agreed that one-third of the *outstanding* debts should be covered by additional deliveries of goods [by Germany] and a further third should be offset by German capital claims, [Reichsbank] President Schacht refused the demand that the remaining third should be settled by means of long-term Reichsbank bills of exchange [*Reichsbankwechsel*].<sup>2</sup> Sokolowski demanded that *future* corridor payments should be effected entirely in foreign exchange, and although President Schacht promised to do so as far as possible, he refused to fix any definite amounts.

Sokolowski made the opening of technical negotiations on the reorganization of traffic through the Corridor<sup>3</sup> conditional on an affirmative decision in the above two questions. He further indicated that if the decision was in the negative Poland would regard the negotiations as having broken down, and that it was likely that there would be further major restrictions on, if not the complete stoppage of, the Corridor traffic. Lipski thereupon called on State Secretary Bülow;<sup>4</sup> for the conversation see the enclosed memorandum.<sup>5</sup>

ROEDIGER

<sup>1</sup> The reference is to the negotiations on payments arising from the railway traffic across Polish territory between East Prussia and the rest of Germany. Earlier documents on this subject are printed in vols. III and IV of this Series; negotiations between Schacht and M. M. Sokolowski of the Polish Ministry of Industry and Commerce began in Berlin at the end of February, 1936 (see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 567, footnote 1). As emerges from a memorandum, IV Po. 1684 of Mar. 5 by Counsellor Mackeben (5643/H000551-55), the outstanding debts at this time amounted to 80 million Złoty.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 6 (9172/E645343) Ritter recorded that, after having seen Neurath, he told Schacht that the Foreign Ministry shared Schacht's views, especially that the Reichsbank could not be expected to guarantee a bill of exchange for the remaining third of the outstanding debt.

<sup>3</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 528, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 22.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (9172/E645331-32); this is identical with document No. 22 except for the omission of the reference to the German Memorandum and of the last three sentences.

## No. 63

4602/E190432

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

The Hungarian Minister told me today that he had learned from his Austrian colleague<sup>1</sup> that he, and apparently the Vienna Government too, thought that the offer of non-aggression pacts in the East applied to Austria as well. M. Sztójay wished to learn from me whether this interpretation was correct. I told him that I could not answer his question. I did not think, however, that the Führer and Chancellor, when making his offer, had been thinking of Austria, which he had indeed not mentioned in his speech either. Nor, of course, was the offer of non-aggression pacts in the East a new one. On this occasion it had obviously been repeated in order to withdraw the exception which was made against Lithuania in last year's speech.<sup>2</sup> In order to answer the question properly, it would be necessary to examine whether the previous offers of bilateral non-aggression pacts had applied to Austria, but on this I could, as I had said, express no views.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Stephan Tauschitz, Austrian Minister in Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

## No. 64

6680/H096373

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department III*

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

IV Chi. 425.

As Freiherr von Lupin, the Secretary General of the Export Consortium for War Material,<sup>1</sup> informs us, the sum of 100 million Marks, which has been made available for the proposed delivery of war material to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, in accordance with the Klein plans<sup>2</sup> and without the knowledge of General von Falkenhausen, comes from War Ministry funds.

ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 791.

<sup>2</sup> For these transactions, see also vols. III and IV of this Series, *passim*.



## No. 65

739/270865

*The Reich Air Ministry to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

ZA Attaché Gr. No. 15583/36/1  
geh. II. Ang.

BERLIN, March 10, 1936.

Received March 11.

II M 897 g.

Subject: Information to be given to foreign Air Attachés regarding the strength of the Rhineland garrisons.

On instructions from the Reich War Ministry, W. A. Ausland, it is ordered that in future, until further notice, no information is to be given in reply to enquiries by foreign Air Attachés regarding the units of the Luftwaffe which have been transferred to the Rhineland.

By order:  
HAUSNER

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<sup>1</sup> This communication was addressed also to the Reich War Ministry, the Ministry of Propaganda and to various departments within the Reich Air Ministry.

## No. 66

6710/E506547-51

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 999

LONDON, March 10, 1936.

Received March 11.

II R 367.

Subject: The mood and situation in England.

In order to obtain an idea of Britain's present attitude towards the great events of the last few days, the elements which go to form British opinion must be divided approximately into the following four categories:

1. *The broad mass of the people.*

They are the most favourably disposed towards the action taken by the Reich Government. The so-called "man in the street" generally takes the view that he does not care a damn if the Germans occupy their own territory with military forces, which is a thing which all the other States do anyway. He has not the slightest intention of getting himself involved and possibly even allowing himself to be drawn into a war over these questions, and he is thoroughly angry at the French starting such a "hullabaloo" again and apparently trying, by their clamour, to harness the British people once again to French interests.

I have on a number of occasions satisfied myself personally that this

attitude exists, and have, moreover, now and then noted downright approval of the German action and of the proposals for securing peace which are associated with it. Of particular significance in this respect, however, seems to me to be the outcome of an enquiry which is published by the *News Chronicle* today and of which I enclose a copy.<sup>1</sup> The views which are there expressed, and which by and large follow the line I have indicated above, seem to me not to be based on any tendentious selection, but accurately and truthfully to reflect what "the man in the street" is thinking.

## 2. *The press.*

As the Foreign Ministry know from the reports of the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro, the attitude of the press can on the whole be described as satisfactory. It is true that sharp criticism of Germany's so-called treaty violation is to be found in many newspapers. On the other hand there are also many gratifying indications of sympathy for the German point of view, and, in general, of a tendency towards objective assessment and calm reflection.

## 3. *Parliament.*

As was again apparent yesterday in the House of Commons, Parliament is several degrees more critical and nervous than is the press, or indeed the broad masses of the people. The atmosphere there is charged with disquiet, anxiety and, indeed, perplexity. Criticism of the German action is very marked there. Indignation at Germany's alleged treaty violation is profound. This is adversely influencing the effect made by the German proposals, since doubts are felt as to the value of any future German promises and, indeed, as to whether there is any point in making fresh agreements with Germany. Nonetheless, Parliament also realizes the necessity for remaining calm and sees that efforts to eliminate as far as possible the risk of war now or in the future, by maintaining contact with Germany, must not be abandoned.

## 4. *Government authorities and other leading political personages.*

Among these persons, both treaty and moral obligations, and the desire to maintain stability in British policy, play an important part. For them Locarno, as the foundation of the Western system of safeguarding peace, upon which Great Britain has based her policy over and over again, is a factor of political value, the sudden disappearance of which might of itself weld them and the other Locarno Powers together in joint action. In addition, there is the embarrassing pressure by France, who, recalling the support which she gave, however hesitantly, to the sanctions campaign against Italy, is now vehemently demanding that this debt be repaid in connection with Germany's alleged crime.

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<sup>1</sup> Not reprinted (6710/E506552); the article, entitled "The Man in the Street Says", appeared in the *News Chronicle* of Mar. 10, 1936.

British statesmen feel as a heavy burden the responsibility that rests upon them to steer Europe through the dangers arising, on the one hand from France's vehement insistence on making impossible demands of Germany and on embarking upon a new sanctions war, on the other from the British efforts not to impair Anglo-French cooperation, and finally also from the aversion, shared by the British, to a policy of so-called resignation, which, by the simple acceptance of the alleged treaty violation by Germany, might constitute another precedent for the vitiation of every treaty.

Germany is reproached not so much for our thesis that the Franco-Russian Treaty of Alliance is incompatible with Locarno nor for our insistence on the abolition of the previous discrimination on the Rhine, but rather for the circumstance that, as it is put here, Germany has made herself the judge of her own case instead of putting forward her complaints and demands, which might perhaps be justified, through negotiations or by going to arbitration.

For these reasons, authoritative quarters in Britain are not free and unprejudiced in considering their verdict, as is public opinion in general, but are restricted by and entangled in all sorts of obligations and restraints, from which there may well ensue decisions of grave import for the peace of Europe.

The overall picture delineated above recalls, although such a parallel is otherwise quite out of place, in certain respects the situation as it was in July 1914.<sup>2</sup> Then, too, public opinion was at first much inclined to be favourably disposed towards the Central Powers. The Sarajevo murder was universally condemned, and everyone agreed that Serbia thoroughly deserved exemplary punishment. When the storm clouds gathered menacingly, however, the picture quickly changed, and then transformed itself with astonishing speed into its exact opposite, into a picture, that is, of a suddenly united national front, standing with one accord behind its leaders.

I have recalled this experience solely as an example of the fact that a sympathetic attitude on the part of public opinion is no absolutely reliable assurance. But it does constitute a valuable basis upon which a Government, determined to be moderate and reasonable, could pursue and implement a policy of reconciliation, unhampered by internal difficulties.

To round off this picture of public opinion, it is worth mentioning that our old and faithful friends, as, for example, General Sir Ian Hamilton,<sup>3</sup> and Colonel Moore, M.P.,<sup>4</sup> with whom we immediately got

<sup>2</sup> Hoesch was Third Secretary at the German Embassy in London at that time.

<sup>3</sup> General Sir Ian Hamilton, Commander of the Mediterranean Expeditionary Force during the Gallipoli campaign in 1915, was at this time President of the British Legion (Scotland).

<sup>4</sup> Lt. Col. Thomas Moore, British Conservative and Unionist M.P.

in touch, are, true to their well-known convictions, active in supporting the German point of view. Lord Londonderry<sup>5</sup> too has written to me privately to say that he will do his share towards ensuring an enlightened attitude as regards policy towards Germany.<sup>6</sup>

HOESCH

<sup>5</sup> Charles, 7th Marquess of Londonderry, British Secretary of State for Air 1931-1935.

<sup>6</sup> This document is marked: "The Reich Chancellor is informed. L[ammers], Mar. 14."

## No. 67

6710/E506642-44

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P 14/3. 36

WARSAW, March 10, 1936.

Received March 11.

II R 400.

Subject: The Reuter report on a statement made by the Polish Foreign Minister to the French Ambassador in Warsaw.

At midday yesterday the correspondent here of the *Berliner Tageblatt*<sup>1</sup> sent his editor a telegram which read approximately as follows: The Reuter report, that the Polish Foreign Minister of his own accord made a statement to the French Ambassador<sup>2</sup> to the effect that Poland would honour in full the obligations arising out of treaties concluded by her, is correct. The treaties in question are the Covenant of the League of Nations, the Locarno Supplementary Protocol<sup>3</sup> and the Franco-Polish Treaty of Alliance.<sup>4</sup> The fact that this statement was made is in contradiction to the semi-official statement by the Polish Government, which takes the German point of view extensively into account and which says that Poland is not directly interested in the whole matter which is one that primarily concerns the Western Powers.

I then requested the correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* to ask his editor not to print this telegram. The editor complied with this request, but in the evening telephoned on his own initiative to say that the telegram had been submitted to the appropriate authorities, who had authorized its publication.<sup>5</sup> I nevertheless persisted in my refusal to allow the report to be published, for the following reasons:

1) The contents of the telegram were incorrect in so far as, according

<sup>1</sup> Rudolf Herrnstadt.

<sup>2</sup> Léon Noël.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Franco-Polish Treaty of Oct. 16, 1925; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LIV, pp. 353-357.

<sup>4</sup> Signed in Paris on Feb. 19, 1921 and ratified on June 27, 1922; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. XVIII, pp. 11-13. See also document No. 61, footnote 4.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note at this point: "Who gave approval for this publication? Please confer with me. D[ieckhoff], Mar. 12." In a minute of Mar. 17 (6710/E506646) Counsellor Schönberg of the Press Department noted that approval had been given by an official of the Propaganda Ministry.



to the Reuter report, Foreign Minister Beck merely declared to the French Ambassador that Poland considered herself bound by her alliance obligations. The Reuter report made no reference to the Supplementary Protocol to the Locarno Pact or to the Covenant of the League of Nations. Today's *Gazeta Polska* has meanwhile also published a Havas Agency telegram from Paris with the same contents.

2) The publication of the report from the *Berliner Tageblatt's* correspondent would undoubtedly have greatly annoyed Polish political circles here, and in particular the Polish Foreign Minister, because it accuses Polish policy of duplicity. And I believe that, particularly at the present moment, it is of the utmost importance that we should not antagonize the Polish Foreign Minister by making an allegation of this sort. As I have already reported by telegram,<sup>6</sup> M. Beck, in speaking to me, described the declaration in question as a statement of the obvious, but at the same time he emphasized very strongly that the Franco-Polish Military Alliance was, of course, a purely defensive alliance, so that in the present instance there was no *casus foederis*. The fact that the Polish Foreign Minister told the Ambassador of Poland's ally France that Poland regarded herself as bound by her alliance obligations cannot, in my estimation, be regarded as proof positive of a double-faced policy. Admittedly it is to be feared that the Polish Foreign Minister will, just as in the case of German rearmament, vote against Germany at Geneva,<sup>7</sup> if the other Powers represented on the Council of the League of Nations should agree on a resolution of this sort. Italy, too, has already had this experience, although she believed, on the basis of certain assurances, that she might count on Polish support.<sup>8</sup>

MOLTKE

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 61.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 65, and documents Nos. 41 and 49.

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note in Bülow's handwriting: "Very true."

## No. 68

6710/E506629-30

### *The Embassy in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 6 of March 10

ISTANBUL, March 11, 1936—1:10 a.m.

Received March 11—7:30 a.m.

II R 395.

With reference to my telegram No. 5 of March 10.<sup>1</sup>

Before his departure for Geneva, I had a conversation of some length with [Rüştü] Aras today, when I again went over all the grounds for the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E506608).

German action in detail and particularly emphasized that the important thing now was to avoid anything which might jeopardize the creation of a lasting peace system such as emerged from the German proposals. He should especially bear this in mind if it should be proposed in Geneva to determine a breach of treaty or even to impose sanctions. Proposals like those recently appearing in the press, "First evacuate and then negotiate", would ruin the prospects for the future.

Aras replied that his policy in Geneva would be, not persistently to hark back to old disputes, but to keep his eyes fixed on the goal of finding a solution which would be satisfactory for the peace of Europe. He had as yet no definite ideas as to what could be achieved. The close ties which bound Turkey to Britain prompted him to strive for agreement with the latter wherever possible. As always, he returned to his aversion to bilateral treaties, but admitted that, if such treaties satisfied those most directly concerned, he would not wish to oppose them. He assured me that he was going to Geneva with the firm intention of working there for a solution compatible with the honour of all concerned. The present historic opportunity should not be let slip.

In the course of our conversation he raised the—ostensibly academic—question as to what our attitude had been at the time towards the Laval-Mussolini Rome accord on mutual military support,<sup>2</sup> about which nothing had been said either in the Memorandum<sup>3</sup> or in the Führer's speech, and which must have seemed to us just as incompatible with Locarno as were the Russian Pact and France's endeavours to obtain a military alliance with Britain. I avoided giving an answer and drew attention to the difference in character of the agreements in question. It is possible that this question, which some quarter may have prompted him to put, will be raised at Geneva.

I would request instructions regarding the attitude I should adopt on this question.<sup>4</sup>

(Without Signature)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>2</sup> For the so-called Rome Agreements of Jan. 7, 1935, see vol. III of this Series, document No. 405 with footnote 1 thereto, and documents Nos. 408 and 417. See also vol. IV, document No. 373.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Despatch II R 395 of Mar. 12 to Ankara, sent on Mar. 19 (6710/E506631), reads: "It would not appear desirable to go more closely into the question, raised by Aras, as to what was our attitude at the time of the Laval-Mussolini Rome accord on mutual military support. If Aras should return to the matter, which he is not expected to do, you should if necessary reply that the content of the agreement referred to by Aras has so far not come to our knowledge. D[ieckhoff]."

<sup>5</sup> The author of this document would appear to be the Ambassador in Turkey, Keller.

## No. 69

6710/E506733-34

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 11, 1936.

RM 213.

II R 425.

The Rumanian Minister<sup>1</sup> called on me this morning in order to obtain information on various points in our Memorandum:<sup>2</sup>

First of all, he wished to know whether we would, if necessary, be prepared to enter into negotiations on the extent of the military occupation of the Rhineland and on the non-construction of fortifications.

I told him categorically that there could be no question whatever of this. The military measures we had taken were simply the expression of the restoration of full sovereignty over Reich territory which had hitherto been withheld from us.

2. He then asked whether the Führer's offer to conclude non-aggression pacts with neighbouring States also included Austria and Czechoslovakia.

I replied that the Führer had already made such an offer last year.<sup>3</sup> If these two countries had not been specifically mentioned again, this was because last year an exception had been made of Lithuania and she had therefore had to be specifically mentioned this time.

3. M. Comnen then asked whether we wished to deal with these pacts within the framework of a general pact, that is, whether we proposed to convene a large conference for this purpose.

I replied that there could be no question of large conferences. If the States in question so desired, we would negotiate with them direct, as we had also done with Poland.<sup>4</sup>

4. Comnen then wished to know whether we also regarded the International Rivers Commissions as being no longer in existence.<sup>5</sup>

I told him that this report had already been denied.

5. Finally the Minister asked that, when we were back in the League of Nations, we should not simply pursue the policy of the Great Powers.

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<sup>1</sup> Nicolae Petrescu-Comnen.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> For the negotiations leading to the German-Polish Agreement of Jan. 26, 1934, see vol. II of this Series, *passim*.

<sup>5</sup> Reports to this effect appeared in the *Prager Presse* of Mar. 10 (K2133/K587048-49). In despatch A. II c. 3 of Mar. 10 (K2133/K587006-07) Eisenlohr reported that, following a telephone conversation with Dieckhoff that morning, the text of an official *démenti* had been agreed upon with the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry; this *démenti* appeared in the *Prager Presse* of Mar. 11 (K2133/K587047).

I replied that at present I could give him no information about our policy in the League of Nations; that would emerge when we were once again installed at Geneva.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

## No. 70

6710/E506674

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

[BERLIN,] March 11, 1936—1:00 p.m.

No. 27

e.o. II R 404.

For the Minister personally.

From secret sources it has become clear beyond any doubt that what Government circles in Prague are telling you is very different from what they are telling their allies. Czechia will follow France unreservedly. Beneš is even advocating economic sanctions in order to bring about the collapse of the German régime.

BÜLOW

## No. 71

6710/E506773

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Argentina to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 22 of March 11

BUENOS AIRES, March 11, 1936—1:15 p.m.

Received March 11—7:15 p.m.

II R 437.

With reference to your telegram No. 21.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> with whom I held language in the sense of your instructions, stated that, in the Council of the League of Nations, Argentina, true to her traditional policy of peace and to her friendship with Germany, would, within the limits of her obligations, support a peaceful development. He promised to issue instructions to this effect to their representative on the Council.

HEBERLEIN

<sup>1</sup> This was the number under which document No. 25 was despatched to Buenos Aires.

<sup>2</sup> Saavedra Lamas.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On March 11, the Belgian Minister President, M. van Zeeland, made an official statement on the Belgian attitude. The text of this statement was forwarded to Berlin in Brussels report A 106 of March 13 (6710/E506924-34).]



## No. 72

6710/E506634

*An Official of the Consulate General at Sydney to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 17 of March 11

SYDNEY, March 11, 1936—5:30 p.m.

Received March 11—11:30 a.m.

II R 397.

In conversations yesterday and today, the Minister for External Affairs<sup>1</sup> could not be induced to accept the German point of view on the German action, but did, however, at once telegraph the German view to the representative on the [League] Council.<sup>2</sup> In the Government, in Parliament and in public opinion, the impression continues to prevail, despite our attempts at influencing it, that Germany has broken a treaty which she had voluntarily signed. The French proposals for sanctions are generally dismissed as out of the question, since Germany has not entered foreign territory. Though Germany's credit has suffered in consequence of the German action, yet European peace can only be secured by a new British-French-German relationship. A Government statement on the German action may be expected this evening or tomorrow. I will attend the parliamentary debate and telegraph the gist of it at once.<sup>3</sup>

HELLENTHAL

<sup>1</sup> Sir G. F. Pearce.<sup>2</sup> The Rt. Hon. S. M. Bruce.<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 19 of Mar. 12 (6710/E506835), Hellenthal reported: "The Prime Minister [J. A. Lyons] stated in Parliament that Germany, who had repeatedly acknowledged the obligations deriving from Locarno, embarked on her action whilst other attempts to ensure peace were in progress. The situation was very serious. No Dominion had, however, entered into any Locarno obligations."

## No. 73

6710/E506703-05

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 142 of March 11

PARIS, March 11, 1936—[6:20 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 11—8:10 p.m.

II R 413.

I. This morning my assessment of the French Government's attitude is as follows:

As you are aware from my reports, the French Government have always viewed the possibility of the Rhineland zone being remilitarized from the standpoint that, if the German Government were unilaterally

<sup>1</sup> The time of despatch is taken from the Paris draft (M208/M006627-29).

to create a *fait accompli*, this would give rise to the danger that, once remilitarization had been completed, the next case of unilateral German action would relate to the Eastern territorial clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and would automatically lead to war. The French view that for this reason France must oppose with all the means at her disposal any unilateral measures in the Rhineland zone was reinforced by the consideration that the occupation of the Rhineland zone and its fortification would, in the event of a conflict on Germany's Eastern frontier, render it much more difficult for France to give military support to Germany's Eastern neighbours. In accordance with this deep-rooted conviction, the French Government's present aim is to contest the recognition of remilitarization in order thus to redress, *de jure* and *de facto*, the denunciation of the Locarno Pact to such an extent that Germany would shrink from creating any further *faits accomplis*. Sarraut, in his broadcast,<sup>2</sup> went beyond the practical statement of this aim by making the absurd demand that the Rhineland zone should first be evacuated, before any negotiations on the German proposals could take place. From yesterday's statement in parliament<sup>3</sup> and from information reaching me, it would appear that the French Government have meanwhile realized the impracticability of so far-reaching a demand. In my opinion, however, they are determined to continue to pursue their aim of an, admittedly less exaggerated, but nevertheless clear and comprehensive, disavowal of the remilitarization, before entering into negotiations on the German proposals. How far they propose to extend their demands it is not yet possible to say. Reports, in large sections of this morning's press, which speak of the prohibition of fortifications are, according to my information, premature.<sup>4</sup>

II. The French Government also appear particularly to have stressed this view to the British during yesterday's discussions with the Locarno Powers.

Otherwise reports on whether or not the French and the British came into conflict over concrete issues are contradictory, which may well be due to some extent to information on the two sessions having in many instances been mixed up.

The great majority of the reports speak of disagreement at the morning session, when the British raised the possibility of immediate negotiations with Germany and the French sharply rejected this.

A report from an absolutely reliable source states that the British suggested opening negotiations on the condition of the non-occupation of

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 8; see Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 28, footnote 6.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 76. In telegram No. 143 of Mar. 11 (6710/E506707) the Embassy in Paris reported that the evening newspapers carried a *démenti* of the reports that the French Government had accepted a solution based on the limitation of the number of troops and non-construction of fortifications in the demilitarized zone.

a strip ten kilometres wide along Germany's Western frontier, and that the French would not accept this.

According to other sources, the French stated that the question of British support was a matter of grave import for France. France was battling with Germany in order to preserve international loyalty to treaties and to prevent "Might" from being internationally acknowledged as "Right". Britain was, in accordance with the reply [*sic*],<sup>5</sup> clearly committed to support France against Germany. France was therefore faced with the question of whether Britain would now support the principle of international loyalty to treaties or would now in her turn disavow her treaty obligations and by so doing accept "Might is Right" as an international system.

Both press reports and other information agree that the Belgians stated that the denunciation of the Locarno Treaty was particularly unjustified in their case, as Belgium had concluded no pact with Soviet Russia.

From one of the participants in the negotiations, who perhaps attended only the second session or who was only reporting about impressions of the second session, I hear that the British did not in fact negotiate with the French at all, but confined themselves almost entirely to asking questions and adopted the attitude that the object of the meeting was that the British Government should be informed of the French view. The British are said to have been visibly impressed by the French exposition of the legal and political situation, as well as by the Belgian objection mentioned above. A confidant and other reliable sources say that the French are taking a distinctly optimistic view of the effect of yesterday's discussions on the British attitude.

FORSTER

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<sup>5</sup> The Paris draft (see footnote 1 above) here reads: "... in accordance with the Locarno Pact ...".

## No. 74

6710/E506677-78

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 39 of March 11

LONDON, March 11, 1936—7:40 p.m.

Received March 11—10:55 p.m.

II R 405.

I have just had a conversation with Lord Lothian,<sup>1</sup> whose views on the situation are much like my own. He is convinced that *for the time being* the broad masses sympathize with the German action and do not

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<sup>1</sup> Philip Henry Kerr, 11th Marquess of Lothian, British Liberal politician, Secretary to the Rhodes Trust, formerly secretary to Lloyd George during the latter's tenure of office as Prime Minister, 1916-1922.

wish to see Britain involved in measures against Germany. On the other hand, he fears French pressure and the difficult position in which the British Government could not but find themselves if France, within the framework of the Locarno provisions and the Covenant of the League of Nations, and basing herself on Germany's being found guilty of a breach of treaty, a verdict which she is striving to bring about, should attempt to force the issue further. He further believes that, should the agitation against Germany be intensified, and should any really dangerous factors emerge, public opinion might swing right round. He also recoils from the prospect of a way out being provided by the conclusion of a formal military alliance between Britain, Belgium and France, which must result in bringing Britain indirectly into contact with the Franco-Russian Alliance. In any case he foresees that France will exert exceptionally strong pressure, with all the dangers to Britain's freedom of action which would be entailed. He therefore makes the following suggestion which, he believes, would strengthen the British Government's hand and bring British public opinion firmly down on our side. As soon as possible, and certainly before the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, the Reich Government should declare that, whilst fully abiding by the reoccupation of the Rhineland to the extent and in the measure in which it has been undertaken, they would now for the time being rest content with this symbolic act. No further places would be garrisoned, and, in particular, the troops would be moved no nearer the French frontier. Provided that a start was made with the negotiations on the proposed German programme in its entirety—and this should include the subject of disarmament or a limitation of armaments—Germany would be ready to abide by this *status quo* until such time as the negotiations were brought to a conclusion. When I objected that such a course would provide the French with the opportunity for all kinds of procrastination and blackmail, Lord Lothian modified his proposal and suggested that Germany should at least undertake to keep to the present extent of the occupation of the former demilitarized zone for a definite period of, say, six months. Lord Lothian repeated that a declaration of this nature would probably deprive the French of the means of exerting pressure.

I naturally made every reservation, but I feel it incumbent on me at least to pass on these ideas of Lord Lothian's.

HOESCH



## No. 75

6710/E508731

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 31 of March 11

ROME, March 11, 1936—7:45 p.m.

Received March 11—9:35 p.m.

II R 424.

According to information received from a variety of sources, and judging from conversations I have had with Aloisi and Alfieri,<sup>1</sup> the first, very violent, surprise at our declaration of willingness to return to the League of Nations has now been succeeded by a certain amount of calm. Mussolini, however, still considers that his most important weapon has been struck from his hand. In addition, it is suspected here that our step was taken in agreement with Britain, and that we had, therefore, preferred to act after previous consultation with London rather than with Rome. In any case, the whole affair is, of course, being viewed primarily from the angle of the Abyssinian question, and in this connection it is evident that strenuous endeavours are being made to take advantage of the relaxation of tension that has ensued, in order, with the aid of France (who is much concerned to draw Italy into her orbit), to get rid of sanctions.

I think it would be desirable for me to be authorized to emphasize once again at the first opportunity that, in the event of our returning [to the League], we should oppose sanctions and indeed make our influence felt as much as possible in support of Italy; and furthermore that, if, as I presume, there was in fact no prior understanding with Britain, I should be enabled to give an official assurance to this effect.

HASSELL

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<sup>1</sup> Dino Alfieri, Italian Under Secretary of State for Press and Propaganda.

## No. 76

6710/E506670-73

*The Foreign Minister to the Missions in Great Britain, France,  
Italy and Belgium, and to the Consulate at Geneva*

Telegram"

BERLIN, March 11, 1936—10:00 p.m.

[zu] II R 403.<sup>1</sup>

- |                 |         |
|-----------------|---------|
| (1) To London   | No. 48  |
| (2) To Paris    | No. 120 |
| (3) To Rome     | No. 41  |
| (4) To Brussels | No. 34  |
| (5) To Geneva   | No. 44  |

To 1-5:

For guidance on language to be held.

Regarding yesterday's conversations in Paris,<sup>2</sup> Havas reports that the French, and apparently the Belgians, too, have put forward the demand that, as compensation for the German *fait accompli* and for the disruption of the international legal system which the French and Belgians consider has resulted therefrom, Germany should undertake not to construct any fortifications in the former demilitarized zone, and that this agreement should be guaranteed by Britain and Italy in the same way as the Locarno Treaty. On the other hand, the idea of limiting the strength of German troops in the former demilitarized zone seems to have been abandoned.

We assume that the idea of prohibiting the construction of fortifications in the former demilitarized zone enjoys the special support of Russia and Czechoslovakia, who are obviously concerned lest the fortification of the German frontier should render it more difficult for France to come to the assistance of her allies in an emergency. We, of course, categorically refuse any such obligations. As long as France is entitled to construct fortifications on her frontier and to maintain as many troops there as she pleases, we must claim the same right for ourselves. We cannot be expected to accept unilateral restrictions on our own security measures. Nor have we reason to afford compensation for the disruption of the legal system which we are alleged to have caused, since the legal system was disrupted not by our action, but by the conclusion of the Franco-Russian Treaty of Alliance which is incompatible with the Locarno Treaty.

<sup>1</sup> II R 403 was Paris telegram No. 141 of Mar. 11 (6710/E506660-64) which forwarded the text of the Havas report under reference.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

An urgent warning must, therefore, be uttered against demands such as are mentioned in the Hayas report; they would at best be calculated to diminish the prospects for an understanding.

As the Führer and Chancellor stated and explained in his interview with Ward Price, published in DNB No. 329 of March 11,<sup>2</sup> we cannot, now that it has been restored, allow any tampering with the full sovereignty over Reich territory, the military rights over which have until now been withheld from us.

NEURATH

### No. 77

6710/E506879

#### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram.

MOST URGENT

No. 40 of March 11

LONDON, March 11, 1936—10:03 p.m.

Received March 12—12:30 a.m.

II R 406.

With reference to our written communication.<sup>1</sup>

Today I got into indirect touch with the Court. The view prevailing in the authoritative quarter is that our proposals could well constitute a basis on which to construct a lasting peace system; in other respects, too, there is understanding there for the German point of view.

The directive given to the Government from there is to the effect that, no matter how the details of the affair are dealt with, complications of a serious nature are in no circumstances to be allowed to develop.

HOESCH

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<sup>1</sup> Not found.

### No. 78

6710/E506722

#### *The Acting Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 18 of March 11

GENEVA, March 11, 1936—10:06 p.m.

Received March 11—11:40 p.m.

II R 421.

(1) Reliable confidants report that a conference of the States of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente was held here today under the chairmanship of Titulescu, when it was decided that the policy which both groups of States should pursue by [*sic* ?in] the Council would be to

demand the strict application of treaties in the sense of the French demands. Should the Council reject collective action, both groups of States would dissociate themselves from the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup> No communiqué has yet been issued.<sup>2</sup>

The Sud-Est<sup>3</sup> report carried by the *Journal des Nations* today, extracts from which follow at once as telegram *en clair* No. 19,<sup>4</sup> has been described to me as a correct reflection of the attitude of the Little Entente States.

(2) Furthermore, there has been a persistent rumour here since this afternoon that in Paris there is increasing displeasure with Great Britain. If France should not receive Britain's consent to the collective action desired by her, she will leave Britain in the lurch, will abolish sanctions against Italy and will threaten a possible withdrawal from the League of Nations after the elections. Furthermore, after consultation with her own and the Russian military authorities, France will order complete mobilization and will then, abandoning the idea of action through the League of Nations, put her demands to Germany direct.

SCHMIEDEN

<sup>1</sup> Schmieden reported on this meeting in despatch No. 504 of Mar. 14 (6710/E507312).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 97.

<sup>3</sup> The Bucharest news agency.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (6710/E506709-10).

## No. 79

6710/E506728-29

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 10 of March 11

BRUSSELS, March 11, 1936—11:39 p.m.

Received March 12—3:20 a.m.

II R 423.

With reference to my telegram No. 9 of Mar. 11.<sup>1</sup>

In reply to my question regarding the import of van Zeeland's statement that Belgium would put forward a claim for compensation, Langenhove told me the following: The decrease in Belgian security as a result of the abolition of the demilitarized zone could not be disputed. Belgium believed that she could base on this fact a claim for compensation, which would be submitted to all four signatories of the Locarno Pact. No decision had yet been reached on the nature of the compensation, and this too would probably first be left to the other Powers, whose duty it was to see that the decrease in security was counterbalanced by definite agreements. In this connection Langenhove pointed out that influential persons in Belgium had

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E506725-26); in this telegram Bräuer had reported the salient points of the statement made that day by Minister President van Zeeland (see Editors' Note, p. 99).



considered her obligations under the Locarno Pact to be too far-reaching and had pressed for the establishment of a statute of neutrality. Perhaps a formula could be found which would ensure for Belgium the right to protection by the Locarno Powers, without imposing upon her any duties other than that of defending her own frontiers. It would, of course, be necessary to proceed carefully so as not to give the impression that the treaties of 1839,<sup>2</sup> whose abrogation had been greeted by Belgian public opinion as the achievement of full sovereignty, were being revived.

With regard to the Locarno discussions in Paris,<sup>3</sup> Langenhove stated that French rigidity (*raideur*) had been their salient feature. The British had said very little. As a result there had emerged no bases for a common platform. In view of the *coup de force*,<sup>4</sup> the French were not willing to enter into negotiations of any kind. As there could not, in reason, be any question of Germany's rescinding the measures she had taken, means would later have to be sought to provide the French with sufficient moral satisfaction to enable them to participate in negotiations for the establishment of a new security system. In any case, Franco-British relations at the Paris discussions had not been particularly cordial, as the French had made the British smart because the Führer's speech<sup>5</sup> and the proposals contained in the Memorandum<sup>6</sup> had shown particular consideration towards Britain, while France had come off so badly.

BRÄUER

<sup>2</sup> Treaties between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia and Russia, on the one part, and the Netherlands on the other, and between Great Britain, Austria, France, Prussia and Russia, on the one part, and Belgium on the other, both relative to the Netherlands and Belgium, were signed at London, Apr. 19, 1839; for the texts see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 27, pp. 990-1002.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> In French in the original.

<sup>5</sup> Of Mar. 7; see Editors' Note, p. 31.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

## No. 80

6710/E506747-49

*The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

A 1421

VIENNA, March 11, 1936.

Received March 12.

II R 432.

Subject: The Austrian Foreign Minister on the German action.

I went and saw the Foreign Minister today, in order, as instructed,<sup>1</sup> to explain to him the motives for the German action, in so far as these were not already clear from the Führer's speech<sup>2</sup> and the Memo-

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 7.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

randum.<sup>3</sup> Baron Berger assured me that, as his Government had always opposed the dictated peace of Versailles and its consequences, they had the fullest sympathy for the denunciation of the Locarno Treaty. All the more so, since his Government, in agreement with the Italian Government, regarded the Bolshevik menace as the greatest evil which needed to be fought in common, and, in this conviction, had always judged the Franco-Russian Pact accordingly. I having pointed, in my statement, to the parallel with the annexation of Bosnia and Herzegovina,<sup>4</sup> when the German Reich, without its own interests being involved, had stood at Austria's side with the full weight of its armaments, he replied that on this question Austria—should she be asked for her opinion at Geneva—would adopt the same attitude.

Baron Berger was further of the opinion that it would not come to negotiations at Geneva, and he praised the British initiative in having the negotiations transferred from Paris or the "Geneva madhouse" to London.<sup>5</sup> He had found it incomprehensible that the French Government should have been in such haste to commit themselves. According to his information (probably from Puaux, the Minister here),<sup>6</sup> the Sarraut Government would fall on this issue, and it was hoped in France that a breach might thus be made in the *front populaire*. He was further informed, he said, that in London the French Government would demand the immediate abolition of the sanctions imposed against Italy.

When I enquired about his views on the repercussions on the Italian dispute, Baron Berger replied that he thought the conflict would be certain to come to an end almost immediately [*alsbald*].

Baron Berger naturally also expressed his regret that the Führer had made no mention of the Austrian question in his big political speech.<sup>2</sup> I countered this with the arguments contained in yesterday's telegram,<sup>7</sup> and referred to an interview granted to Mr. Ward Price,<sup>8</sup> which had been commented on in the press, but the authenticity of which I had not as yet been able to confirm. The Foreign Minister then spoke of Prince Starhemberg's journey to Rome<sup>9</sup> and of the proposal that the Governments of the authoritarian Fascist States should form a common defensive front. This proposal had received enthusiastic approval from Mussolini. As a result the Austrian Government now intended to suggest a joint German-Italian-Austrian exchange of views on this idea. For the moment he wished only to tell me this personally and in confidence—evidently because the question has not yet been discussed with

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> A reference to the events in 1908.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>6</sup> Gabriel Puaux, French Minister in Vienna.

<sup>7</sup> Not found.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 90.

Mussolini. In this connection he seemed to attach importance to emphasizing once again that Minister President Hodža's visit<sup>10</sup> had been of a purely economic nature, and that there was no question of any political fusion between the Rome Protocol States and the Little Entente. In order to define his attitude to this question more closely, he had recently declared categorically to M. Stojadinović that Austria would not participate in any combination which might be directed against Germany.

PAPEN

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<sup>10</sup> Hodža visited Vienna Mar. 9-10, 1936; see also document No. 129. Papen reported on the visit in telegram No. 30 of Mar. 11 (8641/E605044-45).

## No. 81

6710/E506680-82

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, March 12, 1936—2:51 a.m.

No. 41 of March 11

Received March 12—5:50 a.m.

II R 408.

With reference to my telephone conversation with State Secretary v. Bülow.<sup>1</sup>

Eden asked me to come and see him at nine o'clock this evening and revealed that, immediately upon his return from Paris, he had made a report to the Cabinet on the Paris negotiations.<sup>2</sup> The Cabinet had fully realized the extreme gravity of the situation and had directed him to inform me of this.

The gravity of the situation, he said, lay in the fact that, under the terms of Article 4, paragraphs 1 and 2, of the Rhine Pact,<sup>3</sup> the French wanted to tie Britain down to her obligation to afford immediate assistance after a treaty violation had been found by the Council of the League of Nations. At the same time Eden allowed it to be understood that France also envisaged military assistance. The position had been made even more difficult for Britain in the case of Belgium, to whom our accusation with regard to France, namely, that she had violated Locarno by the Soviet Pact, did not of course apply. Britain's traditional principle of honouring her assistance obligations had made the British Government's position one of near compulsion.

Nevertheless, the British Government were determined to strive with all the means at their disposal to find a solution to the crisis. To this end, however, they required the Reich Chancellor's assistance. In

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<sup>1</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1.

yesterday's interview with Ward Price<sup>4</sup> the Führer had spoken of the possibility of Britain playing the part of an honest broker. The British Government wished to play this part. Their suggestion was that the Führer should of his own accord contribute towards solving the crisis by stating that, during the negotiations, to be initiated almost immediately [*alsbald*], on the German proposals, he would be prepared to withdraw part of the German troops sent into the Rhineland and to retain a symbolic Rhineland occupation force only, and also that he would not have any fortifications constructed in the former demilitarized zone while the negotiations were in progress. Were the British Government to receive such a declaration, then, although they could not guarantee the attitude of France who, of course, . . . (group apparently missing)<sup>5</sup> nothing of this suggestion, they would for their part do their utmost to set negotiations in train.

I declared this suggestion to be unrealizable, but promised to transmit it, as was my duty.

I then mentioned, quite casually, the suggestion made to me this morning by Lord Lothian, without, of course, naming its author (see my telegram No. 39 of March 11).<sup>6</sup> I should like once more briefly to summarize this suggestion as follows: Germany should make known the numerical strength of the troops now stationed in the zone and at the same time should undertake, for the period of the negotiations on the German proposals, not to augment these troops nor to move any troops nearer to the French frontier, nor to construct any fortifications. If the specific period "for the duration of the negotiations" should give rise to any objections, a time limit of, say, six months might be fixed, although this would doubtless scarcely satisfy the other side.

Eden stressed that it was of the greatest possible importance that a declaration of this nature should reach him in good time for him to make use of it tomorrow, Thursday, afternoon when the committee of the Locarno Powers was to meet again.<sup>7</sup> In this connection he remarked that the atmosphere during yesterday's negotiations in Paris had been so impossible that the British representatives had decided not to continue the discussions and had succeeded in having them transferred to London. From Eden's description of the situation and from other information received, I do not doubt that the French are taking every possible advantage of the fact of Britain's being bound by the text of the Treaty to compel her to take part in joint action against Germany.

HOESCH

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>5</sup> The word "knew" has been inserted by hand at this point.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 74.

<sup>7</sup> It had been announced in Paris on the evening of Mar. 10 that the discussions on Locarno were to be resumed in London on Mar. 12; see also Editors' Note, p. 113.



## No. 82

6710/E506779-80

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 12 of March 11

WARSAW, March 12, 1936—3:15 a.m.

Received March 12—5:50 a.m.

II R 440.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

Foreign Minister Beck asked me to call on him today and told me the following: He regarded the transfer of the Council of the League of Nations to London<sup>1</sup> as . . . (group missing),<sup>2</sup> because the atmosphere there was better than at Geneva since there was no scope for the pernicious influence of the Secretariat and the Second International. He thought that the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations there would assume something of the nature of a conference, and that there was reason to hope that truly objective deliberations would ensue. He believed, therefore, that for him to be in contact with a German representative or with the Ambassador might perhaps be useful. Should we wish, during the negotiations, to set forth the German point of view to him, he would willingly place himself at our disposal.<sup>3</sup> Even though the German and Polish views might not accord on individual points, we could be certain that he would not listen to our views in an unfriendly spirit, but rather the reverse. In any case we could rest assured that any information we gave him would never be used in a sense contrary to our interests. Like the German Government, the Polish Government wanted to work for the restoration of peace, and it was to be hoped that the negotiations would lead to the establishment of a better and more peaceful way of life in place of the everlasting bickering from which Europe was suffering at present.

Beck was appreciably more frank and positive today than he had been at our first two conversations.<sup>4</sup> I have the impression that he would be delighted to collaborate actively on the questions raised in the German Memorandum, perhaps also with the idea that real advantages for Poland might result.

Bearing in mind that the breaking off of negotiations on the Corridor<sup>5</sup> has caused very great agitation here, I thought it necessary to

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>2</sup> Pencil insertion: "favourable".

<sup>3</sup> See also Szembek: *Journal*, p. 170.

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 19 and 61.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 22. In a letter to Senior Counsellor Roediger of Mar. 13 (9172/E645335-37) Moltke gave reasons for broaching the question of Corridor transit payments.

raise this question of my own accord, in order to try to ensure that the situation is not further exacerbated by precipitate measures. The Foreign Minister remarked that we could scarcely imagine how very difficult his position was becoming, particularly in view of the impending political decisions. Feeling in the Cabinet was very bitter, and this applied particularly to the Minister President.<sup>6</sup> We were probably sufficiently well . . . (one word missing) about the temper of public opinion. At yesterday's Cabinet meeting further restrictions on communications were already to have been imposed. It was only because he had been able to make use of the information, which he had just received from Lipski, regarding the intervention of Minister President Göring which had been ordered by the Reich Chancellor, that it had been possible for him, by drawing attention to the new situation thus engendered, to postpone once more the adoption of a decision. He did not, however, think that the Cabinet would wait longer than the week-end. Beck raised the question of whether it might not be possible to reach at least a provisional settlement, for about six months. He further suggested that, as soon as it was possible to make a concrete proposal, the Polish Minister President should be informed personally, since the latter regarded the previous . . . (one word missing) of the matter as a grave burden on German-Polish relations.<sup>7</sup>

Beck is leaving for London on the Nord Express at noon on Thursday, and will not break his journey in Berlin.

MOLTKE

<sup>6</sup> Marjan Zyndram-Kósciałkowski.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note: "(1) [To] London with the recommendation to get into contact. (2) The conversation Göring-Schacht is to take place tomorrow. v. N[eurath], Mar. 12." The first two paragraphs of the document here printed were transmitted to London by Renthe-Fink as telegram No. 51 of Mar. 12 (6710/E506781), with the Foreign Minister's suggestion that Hoesch should make contact with Beck as soon as possible. A minute on this telegram states that the remainder of Moltke's telegram was being dealt with by Dept. IV Polen.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On March 12, delegates of the Locarno Powers other than Germany met in London. In a communiqué issued on March 12 (for the text see *The Times* of March 13, 1936) they announced that they had unanimously recognized that the German action constituted a clear violation of Articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles and of the Treaty of Locarno, and stated that it would be for the Council of the League of Nations, to whom France and Belgium had referred the matter, to pronounce upon this point. It was further announced that a small committee had been formed of the first delegates of France, Belgium, Great Britain and Italy to study the situation in detail.]

## No. 83

6710/E506834

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 6 of March 12

THE HAGUE, March 12, 1936—1:20 p.m.

Received March 12—3:00 p.m.

II R 450.

The Dutch attitude towards the German proposal for Dutch accession to the non-aggression pact<sup>1</sup> has not yet been clarified. The Council of Ministers have decided to begin by waiting and seeing whether the non-aggression pact comes into being at all, and what it contains. In general, however, the Council of Ministers tended to oppose accession, in order not to deviate from the traditional Dutch policy of independence. The same tendency was apparent from . . . (group corrupt)<sup>2</sup> broadcast speech yesterday, which, and this was clearly done deliberately, avoided the political question altogether and dealt solely with Holland's military position in the light of the international tension which prevails at present. It was stated that, as a result, the Government had been compelled, for the time being, to retain those reservists who would normally have been released at the end of this week. This meant that some 4,000 men, distributed over 24 infantry regiments and one cyclist regiment, would be kept with the colours.

ZECH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 4; see also document No. 16.

<sup>2</sup> The name Colijn has been pencilled in. H. Colijn was Netherlands Minister President. A German text of Colijn's speech, translated from the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* of Mar. 12, 1936, was transmitted by Zech under cover of report A 1218 of Mar. 13 (6710/E506980-84).

## No. 84

6710/E506742-43

*Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 12, 1936.

zu II R 431.<sup>1</sup>

## I

In accordance with the Foreign Minister's directions, I telephoned the following instructions to Herr von Hoesch at 1:55 p.m.:

"With reference to your telegram No. 41:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> II R 431 is not printed (6710/E506741). This transmitted to the Missions in Paris, Rome and Brussels and to the Consulate at Geneva, by telegram of Mar. 12, and to the Legation in Berne by cipher letter of the same date, the text of Neurath's instructions to Hoesch as contained in the document here printed.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 81.

"The Führer and Chancellor authorizes you to give Mr. Eden in his name the following information, in reply to his enquiry, for use *vis-à-vis* the other Locarno Powers:

"1) A discussion regarding the permanent or temporary limitation of our sovereignty over the Rhineland zone is out of the question where we are concerned.

"2) In order to make it easier for the French Government to entertain the German proposals, however, the Führer and Chancellor wishes to define his intention, made known from the start, that the restoration of sovereignty in the Rhineland should at first be signalized in a symbolic manner only, as follows:

"3) The strength of the troops stationed in garrisons in the Rhineland on a peace-time basis has already been made known to the British and French military Attachés here.<sup>3</sup> This strength will not for the time being be increased.

"4) There is at present no intention of moving these troops nearer the French or the Belgian frontier.

"5) The extent of the military reoccupation of the Rhineland as indicated above applies only for the duration of the negotiations now impending. This, of course, presupposes a similar attitude on the part of France and Belgium too.

"When giving Mr. Eden the above information you should, moreover, leave him in no doubt that the whole German treaty offer of March 7 will become void if coercive measures of any kind should be put into execution against Germany.

NEURATH."

## II

I have further informed Herr von Hoesch by telephone that an authoritative press statement will appear here this afternoon, in which the reply to the statements in Sarraut's speech<sup>4</sup> will be given.<sup>5</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>3</sup> For the information given to the French Military Attaché see document No. 23; no record of the communication of this information to the British Military Attaché has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Of Mar. 8; see Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>5</sup> For the text of this statement, issued by DNB on Mar. 12 (63/43784), see *Dokumente der Deutschen Politik und Geschichte*, vol. iv (Berlin, n.d.), pp. 271-274; an English translation appeared in *The Times* of Mar. 13, 1936.



## No. 85

6710/E506785-87

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, March 12, 1936—10:45 a.m. [sic].<sup>1</sup>

No. 43 of March 12

Received March 13—1:40 a.m.

II R 442.

With reference to my telephone conversation with Dieckhoff this afternoon.<sup>2</sup>

I have just given Eden the information about the extent of our military reoccupation of the Rhineland, which, during my telephone conversation with Dieckhoff, I had been instructed to give. Lord Halifax<sup>3</sup> and Sir Robert Vansittart<sup>4</sup> were also present at the discussion which followed.

Eden thanked me for our prompt reply, but said that the content of our communication would hardly contribute to a solution of the crisis. In view of the state of affairs which had now developed, it would not be possible to induce the French, supported by the impressive array of the Powers who form their following, to abandon their position on the strength of our assurances. This could probably only be achieved if, as he had suggested yesterday,<sup>5</sup> the Reich Chancellor were willing, in the interests of a peaceful solution, to promise to withdraw certain military formations, as a symbolic gesture. Our communication also failed to provide the hoped for and important assurance regarding a pause in the construction of fortifications.

Lord Halifax and Vansittart made similar statements, the latter going so far as to say that the announcement of our communication at today's session of the Locarno Committee<sup>6</sup> would probably do more harm than good. This I contested energetically, drawing attention to the importance of the assurances we had given, and stressing particularly that in practice it made no difference at all whether we withdrew a few regiments from the small occupation force or whether we promised not to send any reinforcements. Moreover, the assurance that the present strength of the occupation forces would be maintained for the duration of negotiations constituted an obligation which would remain in force for a considerable period.

Vansittart retorted that our communication meant, so to speak, the

<sup>1</sup> This should presumably read 8:45 p.m. [20:45 hrs].

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Privy Seal.

<sup>4</sup> Permanent Under-Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 81.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 113.

maintenance of the *status quo*. France and Belgium were demanding in principle the restoration of the previous position. A compromise could surely only be found midway, that was to say, in Germany's coming to meet them halfway by means of a symbolic act. Even if Britain were willing to attempt to transmit any lesser German offer, it would be doomed to failure.

To this I replied that, where we were concerned, there could be no question of even a symbolic action by the withdrawal of troops, and that, in any case, I considered that the German Government had reached the limit of what was possible with the assurances they had already given.

Eden then raised the question of fortifications, and all three speakers repeatedly urged me to make clear to the German Government the necessity for an assurance that no fortifications would be constructed during the course of negotiations. Lord Halifax emphasized with particular urgency that, in this extremely grave dispute, Britain was acting as mediator and must be able to rely on German support if the worst were to be avoided. I promised to report this, as was my duty, but I emphasized that further concessions appeared to me to be unlikely.

There then ensued a long discussion on the use to be made of our assurances, during which I repeatedly emphasized that the new conciliatory gesture by the German Government would have to be brought to the knowledge of world opinion in an appropriate manner, in order that the situation might be assessed correctly. This Eden admitted, but he observed that the British Government would have to publish a detailed statement of *their* point of view, namely, that the assurances did not suffice. In consultation with Lord Halifax and Vansittart, it was finally decided that they would wait until tomorrow's meeting of the Locarno Committee to make use of our communication, firstly in order to allow time for a fresh reply to be received from Berlin, and secondly in order to wait and see whether any other opportunities for relaxing tension might occur.

Later, Eden told me by telephone that the essential details of our assurances had already been published in a statement by the Reich Government just issued in Berlin.<sup>7</sup> He would therefore be compelled to make use of my statements at today's meeting of the Locarno Committee after all, namely by describing them as the reply to our yesterday evening's conversation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 84, footnote 5.

<sup>8</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 12 (6710/E506783-84), Dieckhoff recorded that Hoesch had communicated the substance of his conversations with Eden in two telephone calls at 5:40 p.m. and 6:20 p.m. that evening. Part of Dieckhoff's record of the second telephone conversation reads: "I told Herr von Hoesch that the reference to an announcement in Berlin was obviously to the statement which I had already mentioned in our telephone conversation at 2 p.m. [see document No. 84] and that the Führer and Chancellor

I should be grateful if I could be informed early tomorrow, Friday, of the Reich Government's views on the further wishes of the British Government.

Hoesch

would probably refer to these matters in his speech at Karlsruhe this evening. We had no objection to publication by the British, and no objection to Eden saying that the suggestion for such a gesture had come from him. In my view it would be better for this step not to appear to be a spontaneous step [on our part], as otherwise it could be taken as proof of nervousness. The Foreign Minister, whom I informed of both my telephone calls to Herr von Hoesch, at once got in touch with Karlsruhe and informed the Führer."

For extracts from Hitler's speech at Karlsruhe see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1304-1307.

## No. 86

6710/E506820-21

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 12, 1936.

e.o. II R 455.

With reference to your telegram No. 14 of March 7<sup>1</sup> and our telegram No. 29 of March 11.<sup>2</sup>

For your personal information only.

It has been reported to us by an absolutely reliable quarter that, when the Rhineland was reoccupied, the Czechoslovak Government gave the French Government an assurance that, where her political attitude towards Germany was concerned, Czechoslovakia would go hand in hand with France, since the whole Franco-Czech security system in the East and in the Danubian region would be seriously threatened if the German action were to meet with success. Furthermore, the report confirms that the Czechoslovak Government has suggested to Stojadinović, as Chairman of the Council of the Little Entente, that a meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the three States of the Little Entente should be called in order to lay down a common policy in the light of the latest events. One of the main points on which, in the Czech view, the Governments of the States of the Little Entente should consult with each other was some action designed to draw the attention of the British Government to the allegedly shattering blow dealt to the security in the East and in the Danubian region by the German action.

We have been further informed that Beneš has taken the view that

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 15.

<sup>2</sup> This was the number under which document No. 56 was forwarded to Prague (6710/E506612).

the internal situation in Germany is extremely critical, and that economic and financial measures might in themselves suffice to induce Germany to withdraw, or might even overthrow the régime in Germany.

By order:  
[DIECKHOFF]<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> The document here printed is initialled by Renthe-Fink; Dieckhoff's signature appears on another copy (6710/E506822-23).

## No. 87

5576/E400411-12

### *The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich War Ministry (Copy to the Foreign Ministry)*

LONDON, March 12, 1936.

Received [March 13].<sup>1</sup>

II M 914 g.

Annex 12 to [Report] 10/36

Seen: v. Hoesch.

Subject: Personal impressions in London on March 12, evening.

1) There seems to be a *gulf* between the assessment of the situation at the main political battlefield in London and at the German nerve-centre [*Zentrale*].

2) Of the views I have heard, that of the American Military Attaché<sup>2</sup> is still the *most optimistic* (see Annex 11 to this report).<sup>3</sup>

My own view was today described, by an observer outside the Embassy whom I have come to know as an exceptionally good judge, as *not sufficiently serious* [*zu wenig ernst*].

3) British public opinion has so far held steady. It has not improved. It can, as experience has shown, do a very sudden about-turn. Important weapons, such as the powerful voice of Austen Chamberlain, appear so far to have been deliberately [*planmässig*] held in reserve.

4) Fleet Street and the Labour Party are deeply disturbed, *more than before*. Leading articles and letters to the newspapers are misleading as the Government press is trying to hold firm. Lloyds' and insurance premiums against war run for one month or longer and are at the moment still undisturbed.

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed is slightly damaged by fire, and the date of receipt is consequently no longer legible. The figure 13 can however still be discerned both on this document and on that cited in footnote 3 below, and both were circulated within the Foreign Ministry on Mar. 13 (5576/E400410; 13).

<sup>2</sup> Lt.Col. R. E. Lee.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5576/E400407-09); in this Geyr von Schweppenburg reported Lee's view as to the chances of a war.



5) Within and outside the Embassy, there is not *one* informed person who has witnessed developments in the last few days and is other than deeply disturbed. The view that Berlin does not sufficiently appreciate the seriousness of the situation, is general.

5 [sic]) In practice, the following *possibilities* are for consideration:

a) A further attempt to bring about a *rapprochement* between the German and French standpoints by negotiation. This is at the moment still in progress, if with little observable prospect of success.

b) An ultimatum for the withdrawal of the German troops. Will certainly be avoided as long as possible by the British side.

c) Sanctions resolutions, once the League of Nations Committee have gone into session.

British participation seems entirely possible; the probable German reply is causing the advocates of peace profound anxiety.

Pacification on a basis of the present *status quo*, as in the question of military sovereignty,<sup>4</sup> seems altogether difficult to conceive.

A warning must be given against building *solely* on the attitude of the monarch, should this perhaps have been taken to be one of preserving peace unconditionally. [*Es ist davor zu warnen, allein auf eine etwa als unbedingte Friedenssicherung angenommene* [sic] *Einstellung des Trägers der Krone zu bauen.*]

FRH. V. GEYR  
Major General

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<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the German denunciation of the military, naval and air clauses of the Treaty of Versailles in March 1935; see vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 532 and 538.

## No. 88

5606/E401816-10

*The Military and Air Attaché in France to the Reich War Ministry  
(Copy to the Foreign Ministry)*

Enclosure 1 to Report 8/36<sup>1</sup>

PARIS, March 12, 1936.

Received March 13.

II M 918 g.

Subject: Situation Report.

The comparative calm with which the reoccupation of the demilitarized zone has, to all appearances, been accepted must not be allowed to obscure the fact that the situation, as seen from here, is exceptionally serious. It is in keeping with the French character that

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (M284/M011818-19). This report is dated Mar. 13; a note on its list of addressees states that its enclosures 1 and 2 had been transmitted to the Foreign Ministry beforehand.

this step is felt to be incomparably more serious than the reintroduction of universal military service a year ago.<sup>2</sup> Although there seems to be comparatively widespread understanding for the basic principles of the matter, the manner in which this step was carried out meets with unanimous condemnation.

Today, again, it is not so much Germany's action itself as anxiety regarding complications in the future which is prompting the French Government to endeavour, by adopting a firm attitude, to put a stop once and for all to "unilateral treaty violations" of this nature. People are asking themselves: What will be Germany's next step of this kind in a year's time? and "what guarantee is there that in future Germany will honour her obligations?"—questions designed to discredit the Reich Government's new proposals even before they have become the subject of negotiation.

The main argument employed against our point of view is the fact that the Franco-Russian Pact was signed on May 2, 1935, and that nearly three weeks later the Führer expressly reaffirmed his recognition of the Locarno Pact for the future in his Reichstag speech.<sup>3</sup> Consequently, when Germany cites the ratification of the Russian pact as justification for her action, this does not meet with any sympathy whatever here. A further weapon which France will use against us is the Stresa Resolution of April 16, 1935,<sup>4</sup> which, on the basis of what happened when universal military service was reintroduced, lays down<sup>5</sup> specifically the measures to be taken against the culprit in the event of such a case of "unilateral treaty violation" recurring.

Nothing has been observed here of any special mobilization measures. From press reports I have by and large gained the impression that the first stage of security measures in the Eastern Military District was carried out automatically.

The following individual reports are to hand:

(1) The units detailed for the purpose in the *régions fortifiées* of Military Districts VI, VII and XX, which, according to *Le Matin*, are, generally speaking, *all* infantry, artillery and cavalry units, have manned the fortifications in the proposed strength (March 9).

(2) The 6th Moroccan Rifle Regiment (Montélimar) has left its station and moved into the Montmédy sector, which it occupied last year (March 9).

(3) As part of the measures referred to under (1) above, the units of the Nancy garrison, e.g. the 26th Regiment of Chasseurs, the 510th Tank

<sup>2</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 532 and 538.

<sup>3</sup> On May 21, 1935; see vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the resolution submitted to the League Council by France, Britain and Italy on Apr. 16, 1935, and adopted the following day; see vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> Pencil insertion in an unidentified handwriting at this point: "(was intended to!) [sollte!)]".

Regiment, the 8th Artillery Regiment and the 18th Regiment of Engineers, have moved up to the frontier (March 9).

(4) *Le Matin* reports from Strasbourg that all the fortifications on the Lauter and the Rhine from Lauterburg to Hüningen have been manned in the proposed strength.

(5) The 50th Artillery Regiment (Châlons s. Marne) has been sent to the frontier by rail. The 25th Motorized Artillery Regiment is standing by. The troops in the training areas of Suippes, Mourmelon and Mailly are being moved by rail. Requisitioning of lorries at Châlons s. Marne (*Petit Parisien* of March 9).

(6) Belfort: Troop detachments are marching through the town bound for the Rhine fortifications (*Havas*, March 9).

(7) Epinal: Covering troops from the garrisons of Epinal, Remiremont and St. Dié are leaving their barracks to move into the frontier fortifications (*Havas*, March 9).

(8) Nancy: All officers of the garrison have been alerted. The units left the town at 1.30 a.m. for the fortified zone. Lorries have been requisitioned to move the troops. At the Gare de l'Est all available locomotives are being kept in readiness with steam up (March 8).

(9) The measures taken on Sunday, March 8, represent the first stage of security precautions in times of tension (*Paris Midi* of March 10).

(10) Nancy: Twenty trains carrying lorries and tanks passed through Nancy bound for Forbach on Monday, March 9. The trains came from Toul and Bar-le-Duc. The Grand Couronné has been occupied by anti-aircraft troops (*Paris Midi* of March 11).

Summing up, I can report that, according to reliable information, apart from measures taken under *preliminary* readiness no further steps such as are appropriate to times of tension or even to mobilization have been taken. I am nevertheless of the opinion that, unless we make some conciliatory move which will somehow make up for the nature of our previous action, the gravest consequences must be expected.<sup>6</sup>

KÜHLENTHAL

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<sup>6</sup> In enclosure 2 to his report 8/36 of Mar. 12 (5606/E401820-22) Kühlenthal reported the views of several French senior officers on the German action, as expressed on the occasion of a luncheon given by General Gamelin to the Military Attachés on Mar. 10.

## No. 89

6710/E506989-91

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

1363

ROME, March 12, 1936.

Received March 14.

II R 494.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The Italian attitude towards the German Locarno Memorandum.

I have already reported by telegram on the reception given to the German Memorandum by the Italian Government, and in particular by Mussolini.<sup>1</sup> On instructions, the Italian press has not so far published any comment of its own.

In assessing the situation here, one must, above all, remember that Italy's attitude towards our action differs fundamentally from that of the other Locarno Powers. From the point of view of Italian interests, Mussolini has no objection to our action as such, that is, to the denunciation of Locarno and the occupation of the Rhineland. The relief thus afforded him was undoubtedly welcome. Owing to our having consulted with him<sup>2</sup> before taking our step he was already prepared for it. He was not, however, prepared for the scope of the German counter-proposals, and in particular our willingness to return to the League of Nations. The notification of this came as a most unwelcome surprise to him; it meant that he was no longer able to threaten to withdraw from the League of Nations in the event of sanctions being intensified. Whether or not he ever really intended to withdraw from the League of Nations if occasion arose is beside the point; similarly, the extent to which Italy's reply to the Geneva appeal<sup>3</sup> was influenced by our action is—from the German point of view—of minor importance where the political repercussions in Rome are concerned. That it *was* so influenced can be taken for granted, just as it is also a fact that grist has been added to the mill of those who are in favour of trying to reach a settlement of the Abyssinian dispute with the aid of France.

Then there is the following: in her present difficult position Italy is unwilling to burn any boats. Mussolini is as yet unwilling to decide whether his way is ultimately to lead back to Stresa<sup>4</sup> or to cooperation with Germany; he would like to keep all possibilities open. For the

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 18.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 579 and 603.

<sup>3</sup> For the Committee of Thirteen's appeal to the Abyssinian and Italian Governments see document No. 1, footnote 1; for the Italian reply see document No. 28, footnote 8.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 45, footnote 8.



League of Nations, with which he is in dispute, to be strengthened, would be unwelcome to him, and to this extent it is not at present to his interest to have Germany express her willingness to return to it.

Finally, there is yet another aspect to be considered. Even should the Italians admit that our action has afforded Italy some relief by diverting the attention of the world from Italy to Germany, there is nonetheless no inclination to view this as deliberate and intentional support for Italy; they are asking why, if we were so well-intentioned towards Italy, we did not inform her of what we had in mind on the one question which, of them all, was the most important one for Italy, namely the possibility of our returning to the League of Nations.

If one attempts to sum up the present situation in Rome in the sense of an "interim result", one might perhaps say that, from the point of view of Italian interests, our action is advantageous rather than disadvantageous, in spite of Italy's having been deprived of the chance of threatening to withdraw [from the League of Nations]. From the German point of view the increased chances of an early and amicable settlement of the Abyssinian conflict, with France acting as mediator, can hardly be regarded as an advantage. Naturally Italy's paramount interest in a successful conclusion of the African enterprise will prejudice Italy's future attitude in our disfavour and will adversely affect the tendency, which undoubtedly exists here, not to embarrass us. Now that the first shock has been overcome, however, German-Italian relations, which at first were to some extent put to the test by our action, can be described as not having been disturbed yet. From my second conversation with Mussolini,<sup>5</sup> and from my conversations with Signor Suvich<sup>6</sup> and other political personalities, I have gained a definite impression that Mussolini is anxious to maintain his previous policy towards us. With an eye to future developments it would be desirable for us to convince the Italians that we, too, wish to adhere to our previous course, and, above all, that in the event of our returning to the League of Nations we intend to exert our influence there in Italy's favour.

HASSELL

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 41.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 28.

## No. 90

6114/E454606-08

*The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

TOP SECRET

No. 32 of March 12

VIENNA, March 13, 1936—0:25 a.m.

Received March 13—3:55 a.m.

II Oe. 767.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

Prince Starhemberg asked me just now to come and discuss with him his conversation with Mussolini.<sup>1</sup> He said he had explained to him how necessary it was to create a front of those States having authoritarian Governments against the combined onslaught of Bolshevism and Jewish democracy. Mussolini had most cordially welcomed this proposal and had pointed out the need for a realignment of forces in Europe after the conclusion of the Abyssinian conflict. Starhemberg had discussed the plan further with Aloisi and Alfieri as Mussolini had charged him to do. The proposal was made that during Easter week a representative each of the National Socialist German Workers' Party, Fascism, and the Austrian régime, should meet in some inconspicuous place. It was suggested that Germany should send Reich Minister Hess, that Starhemberg should represent Austria, and Mussolini be represented by the Secretary General of the Fascist Party.<sup>2</sup> It was not proposed to speak about the past, but rather to ascertain what the systems of government had in common, how far their major aims coincided and to what extent they could cooperate to achieve these aims. Mussolini had expressed the hope that Germany would take part in the conversations. Starhemberg added that if a common line in foreign policy could be found in this way, the German-Austrian conflict would automatically be settled. He said he supported this proposal also by reason of the fact that he did not wish to go on being compelled to see his adherents included in one front with Christian Socials and Democrats, with whom he had no links except the preservation of Austrian independence, and who, from an ideological point of view, were widely separated from him. I pointed out how urgently necessary it was that, for the sake of initiating collaboration with Italy, the Locarno dispute should first be settled without any upheaval. Starhemberg promised to telegraph to Mussolini today and ask him to leave London in no doubt as to Italy's attitude in the dispute. He

<sup>1</sup> Prince Starhemberg was in Rome from Mar. 4-8, 1936, and saw Mussolini on Mar. 5. Hassell reported Suvich's account of Starhemberg's conversations in despatch 1323 of Mar. 9 (6114/E454605).

<sup>2</sup> Achille Starache.

added that the Austrian Government considered that the further treatment of the Austrian question in London would be of exceptional importance.

The accuracy of this view is confirmed by today's recall of the British Minister<sup>3</sup> here to London. In a conversation of some length which I have just had with him he described the Austrian question as one of the major points in the London negotiations. If Germany wished to liquidate the Locarno dispute without any upheaval, a bilateral treaty with Austria would, in his view, not be sufficient to dispel the anxiety of third Powers. I replied that a collective treaty was out of the question, that, instead of a non-aggression pact, a pact of friendship with Austria seemed more desirable to me, and that one could notify the League of Nations of such a treaty on entry. Selby seemed quite satisfied with this proposal and thought that the Austrian question could thereby be settled in respect of third Powers too. I asked him to stress above all in London the importance of the German offer in respect of the League of Nations and to ensure that the new ordering of European peace was not burdened or hindered by impossible demands. The general impression here is that our position in London is not unfavourable, although the Reich Government's statement,<sup>4</sup> which has just become known, is regarded as a sign of weakness.

PAPEN

<sup>3</sup> Sir Walford Selby.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 84 and footnote 5 thereto.

## No. 91

6710/E506813-14

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, March 13, 1936—2:15 a.m.

PRIORITY

Received March 13—5:45 a.m.

No. 44 of March 12

II R 448.

With reference to my telegram No. 43.<sup>1</sup>

The situation today looks extremely serious.

With my concurrence, Eden has made public the information I gave him today on the extent of the occupation of the Rhineland.<sup>2</sup> A later Reuter commentary describes our assurances as not calculated to relax the tension, and asserts that the situation has deteriorated.

For the British Government the position is that, if the French continue intransigent, they will be faced with the choice between

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 85.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the statement released to the press see *The Times* of Mar. 13, 1936.

honouring their obligation to afford immediate assistance as soon as a treaty violation by Germany has been established, or of being guilty, in French eyes, of a breach of treaty, with, so the French threaten, the resultant collapse of the system of reciprocal peace guarantees. This alternative was clearly confirmed today to a member of the Embassy by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Monsell, who added that Britain, who, by taking the lead in the sanctions campaign against Italy, had only recently committed herself to a policy of strict fulfilment of collective obligations, could not possibly adopt any other attitude towards Germany now.

What the French will do, therefore, seems to be of decisive importance at this juncture. If, as they appear to intend doing, they carry things to the point of presenting Germany with an ultimatum as regards evacuating the Rhineland zone . . . (two groups mutilated) and if, on rejection of this demand, they resort to force, it must logically be assumed that Britain will then furnish the military assistance which she considers herself bound to give. A speech from Sir Austen Chamberlain, who has so far refrained from expressing an opinion but who is known to consider himself in honour bound to fulfil this obligation to render assistance, could be the decisive turning point. The shift of opinion, which in my reports<sup>3</sup> I described as a possibility, has in the meantime made considerable progress, to our disadvantage. I learn from reliable parliamentary circles that the House of Commons, which as recently as the day before yesterday acclaimed Lloyd George's pro-German speech,<sup>4</sup> has changed its opinion very considerably, and that many members have become convinced that there is no choice but to take action against Germany's alleged treaty violation. Public opinion generally has now also begun to feel anxiety and uneasiness about the chances of preserving peace. The Stock Exchange has reacted accordingly.

If one were to ask what we could do to counter the threat of war, attention would have to be invited to the British suggestion<sup>5</sup> that, as a spontaneous gesture in the interests of maintaining peace, the Reich Chancellor should order the withdrawal of a substantial proportion of the occupying troops for the period of negotiations on the German proposals and should undertake to refrain for the same period from constructing fortifications. Otherwise the British Government would appear to see no possibility at present of controlling the course of events which in so many respects is reminiscent of 1914.<sup>6</sup>

Hoesch

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 66 and 74.

<sup>4</sup> Evidently a reference to Lloyd George's speech on Mar. 10; for text see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 309, cols. 2026-2037.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 81.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "The Reich War Ministry have received a copy direct. On the State Secretary's instruction no further action is to be taken. K[amphoeven], Mar. 13."



## No. 92

6710/E506825-26

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 145 of March 12

PARIS, March 13, 1936—10:30 a.m. [sic].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 13—10:30 a.m.

II R 456.

I. The question of economic and financial sanctions is now being discussed at great length in the French press. At present the pro-sanctionists and the anti-sanctionists are lined up against each other. As in the case of Italy, the former are opposed to sanctions mainly on principle; they also include commercial and industrial circles, who consider that the damage done to their own economy by sanctions will be greater than the pressure exerted on the country on which these sanctions are imposed. The pro-sanctionists are constantly gaining ground at their expense.

II. The pro-sanctionists proceed from the assumption that Germany's economic position is deteriorating rapidly and that the German economy will therefore be considerably more susceptible to the effects of sanctions than the Italian economy. The foundation for this view has been laid by the numerous articles published recently, in which Germany's financial and economic position has been painted in the darkest colours. From these articles it is concluded that under the additional pressure from sanctions Germany will be bound to collapse after only a short time. Similar views are expressed in most of the reports from newspaper correspondents in Berlin, who draw attention to the grave anxiety felt in Germany at the prospect of sanctions. In contrast to the attitude adopted towards the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, there are those who stress the direct advantages which France's economy would derive from sanctions in consequence of the elimination of German competition. Others are willing to accept the damage to their own economic interests as the price of attaining the major objectives of French foreign policy.

In so far as practical proposals for sanctions have been made in the press, the prevailing view is that financial sanctions would not be sufficient, since Germany is already, financially speaking, as good as cut off from the rest of the world. The prospects of success for economic sanctions are regarded as being all the greater. Opinions vary as to what should be included in the list of economic sanctions. The majority have in mind the kinds of sanctions applied against Italy. Some

<sup>1</sup> The time of despatch is given as 9:00 a.m. on the Paris draft (M287/M012029-30).

regard these as not being necessary, but consider that individual measures would be sufficient. In particular the following have been proposed: an embargo on raw materials (partly only on raw materials of military importance, such as nickel, manganese and, in particular, bauxite), closure of British and French ports to German shipping, a ban on the import of German goods and a tourist boycott (1000 Mark barrier).<sup>2</sup> In this connection the Olympic Games and the anticipated foreign exchange proceeds play an important part.

Opinions also differ as to who should participate in the French sanctions programme. Some expect success only if all States, or at least those which took part in the sanctions against Italy, join in. Others think that the participation of the Great Powers would be sufficient. Others again would be satisfied with the Locarno Powers, which provide Germany with a surplus of foreign exchange for the purchase of raw materials, particularly in the United States and Brazil.

III. I understand from Foreign Ministry circles that there was at first no liking for economic sanctions in official quarters either. A change occurred in this respect after the termination of the Locarno discussions held here,<sup>3</sup> and since then all the competent departments have been instructed to study the question with all speed. There has also been a change of attitude towards sanctions in the hitherto anti-sanctionist industrial and banking circles of Paris, incited thereto by reports from the City of London.

FORSTER

<sup>2</sup> Evidently a reference to the fee of 1000 Reichsmark which had been imposed by the German Government in 1933 on exit visas for German citizens intending to visit Austria; see vol. I of this Series, document No. 262.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

## No. 93

6710/E506881

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 25 of March 13

BUCHAREST, March 13, 1936—12:00 noon.

Received March 13—3:30 p.m.

II R 469.

Rumours are current here that the despatch of Russian aircraft to Czechoslovakia and similar mobilization measures are designed to provoke Germany into taking counter-measures, which could then be used as a pretext for imposing military sanctions.

In justification of the immediate despatch of troops into the

Rhineland, is it permissible,<sup>1</sup> as a line of argument, to point out that by so doing we wished to forestall similar French measures on the pattern of the occupation of the Ruhr?<sup>2</sup>

POCHHAMMER

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "No".

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "[To] Senior Counsellor v. Renthe-Fink. (The reply to Pochhammer has already been despatched.) D[ieckhoff], Mar. 14." See document No. 111.

## No. 94

6710/E506732

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

PRIORITY

BERLIN, March 13, 1936—12:15 p.m.

No. 46

zu II R 424.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 31 of March 11.<sup>1</sup>

The first information regarding the German action was given to the British and Italian Governments simultaneously, nor was any previous contact of any kind made with the British Government regarding the individual proposals, such as for our return to the League of Nations.

You are authorized to state this officially to the Italian Government and at the same time to declare that Germany has no intention of adopting an anti-Italian attitude after having returned to the League of Nations. At the London negotiations, however, we expect the Italians to combat the imposition of any sort of sanctions against Germany and to oppose resolutions which leave open the possibility of such action.

BÜLOW

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 75.

## No. 95

6710/E506889

### *The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 9 of March 13

CAPE TOWN, March 13, 1936—1:13 p.m.

Received March 13—1:30 p.m.

II R 473.

With reference to my telegram No. 8.<sup>1</sup>

In reply to a question, the Prime Minister<sup>2</sup> told me that his Government had informed the British Government that they could rely on

<sup>1</sup> Of Mar. 13; not printed (6710/E506840).

<sup>2</sup> General J. B. M. Hertzog.

South Africa's support in their efforts to maintain peace and to reorganize Europe in the sense of Baldwin's statement on Anglo-German-French friendship.<sup>3</sup> His Government regarded the termination of German-French tension and the removal of the injustice and indignity of the Versailles Peace Treaty as urgently necessary and thought that the time for this had now come.

WIEHL

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to Baldwin's speech in the House of Commons on Mar. 9 (see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 309, cols. 1827-1841), when he said: "In Europe we have no more desire than to keep calm, keep our heads and to continue to try to bring France and Germany together in a friendship with ourselves."

## No. 96

8439/H221024-26

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PARIS, March 13, 1936—[1:35 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

No. 147 of March 13

Received March 13—2:15 p.m.

II R 461.

Information received from a very reliable source gives the following picture:

The calm mood of the population and the outward reserve hitherto shown by military circles cannot disguise the fact that the situation is serious.

The majority of politicians, both those in parliament and others, are becoming increasingly vehement in advocating a policy of intransigence. They are being most vigorously supported by influential groups in the Foreign Ministry (Léger-Massigli-Comert<sup>2</sup>). The nucleus of this movement within the Cabinet is formed, first and foremost, by Flandin and Mandel, and after them Sarraut, who is very much under Mandel's influence. The idea of this movement is to go to the limit in resisting the Third Reich, including, if necessary, the use of armed force. They believe that, faced with such a threat, Germany could not stand firm. Germany's financial and economic position is held to be extremely weak, and her military preparations incomplete. In their opinion, the internal political situation in Germany is also very tense; they are convinced that Germany's action was taken against the will of the responsible economic, foreign affairs and military authorities, and that this supposed opposition is bound to react to Germany's disadvantage as the situation develops. The supporters of this point of view are thinking

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris draft (M287/M012034-35).

<sup>2</sup> P. Comert, Head of the Information and Press Section of the French Foreign Ministry.



in the first place of a diplomatic struggle *à l'outrance*, including, if necessary, a threat to Britain that France will withdraw from the League of Nations. As a last expedient there is also talk of military action by France without the active participation of Britain; this might be initiated by an ultimatum demanding the withdrawal of troops from the Rhineland zone.

Other members of the Cabinet (e.g., Paul-Boncour) are opposed to intransigence and in favour of negotiations. They, too, believe that France is in a strong position. They regard France's legal case as incontestable. They are not yet sure of Britain's attitude, politically speaking, but they believe that, with the support of Russia, the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente, all of whom are held to be solidly behind France, they would be able to bring further, strong pressure to bear on Britain. The common and, in their opinion, powerful argument with which to confront Britain is that the British Government could not adopt the position of demanding the imposition of sanctions against Italy by the smaller States if the British lines of communication with India were involved, and then remain aloof when the vital interests of France and her vassal States *vis-à-vis* Germany were at stake. They are of the opinion that Holland and the Northern States will adopt the same attitude.

This group still wants negotiations and a final settlement of German-French relations. They are seeking what they regard as a pre-requisite for this, namely some "symbolic gesture", which would be acceptable to Germany and which would open the door for negotiations. This might, if need be, be made to coincide with a "symbolic gesture" on the part of France. They do not seem to have made up their minds here as to what form such gesture might take. In particular, I cannot yet say whether those members of the Cabinet who favour negotiations will take into consideration the German offer not to increase the strength of the occupation forces during the negotiations.

In today's press that section of opinion which is in favour of negotiations is scarcely represented at all. On the contrary, the press almost everywhere reflects increasing intransigence.

FORSTER

## No. 97

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 35 of March 13

ATHENS, March 13, 1936—3:25 p.m.

Received March 13—5:15 p.m.

II R 468.

The joint communiqué which Titulescu has caused the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente to draw up,<sup>1</sup> and according to which both groups "support absolutely and without reservation the attitude adopted by France and Belgium towards Germany's denunciation of the Locarno Treaty", appeared in yesterday evening's *Estia*. As it was not possible to reach Demertzis<sup>2</sup> that evening I sent word to him through officials of the Foreign Ministry that, in view of the repeated official declarations made to Minister Eisenlohr<sup>3</sup> that Greece would accept no obligations outside the Balkans, the communiqué was completely incomprehensible to us.

This morning's newspapers publish an official announcement, according to which the Greek representative at Geneva<sup>4</sup> has not been authorized to approve the communiqué, which exclusively represents Titulescu's own personal views. As the Minister President is ill, I called on State Secretary Mavroudis,<sup>5</sup> who assured me that Greece would maintain strict neutrality in the Locarno dispute. Significantly, he replied evasively to a question in this connection as to whether Greece had entered into any obligations outside the Balkans. I presume that Titulescu would hardly have called upon the Balkan Entente on behalf of the Little Entente and thus also of France, had he not known himself to be covered by the existence of some special agreement, to the contents of which the expected reply will probably furnish a clue.<sup>6</sup> Mavroudis added that Rangabé<sup>7</sup> had received instructions during the night to straighten out the misunderstandings which had arisen with the Reich Government and to declare that Greece would remain absolutely neutral.<sup>8</sup>

KORDT

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Constantin Demertzis, Greek Minister President and Foreign Minister.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 459 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> R. Bibica Rosetti.

<sup>5</sup> N. Mavroudis, Director General of the Greek Foreign Ministry.

<sup>6</sup> In despatch II GA 2a of Mar. 14 (6710/E507479-80), Kordt reported that it appeared that the then Greek Foreign Minister, M. Maximos, had signed a Protocol in Geneva on June 3, 1934, to the effect that the Balkan Pact, including Article 3 of its Secret Protocol, had not been affected by any qualificatory statements made in parliament by the Greek Government. For the text of the Balkan Pact of Feb. 9, 1934, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLIII, pp. 153-159; a text of an unpublished protocol had been acquired by the German Legation in Bucharest in April 1934 (see vol. II of this Series, document No. 246, footnote 3).

<sup>7</sup> Alexandros Rizo-Rangabé, Greek Minister in Berlin.

<sup>8</sup> See also document No. 110.

## No. 98

6710/E506873

*The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 45 of March 13

LONDON, March 13, 1936—7:14 p.m.

Received March 13—9:30 p.m.

II R 467.

For Reich War Minister Colonel General von Blomberg personally.

After a joint and meticulous examination of political developments here the Military, Naval and Air Attachés have the duty to report that the situation should be regarded as exceptionally grave. An extremely unfavourable development may occur in the next few days. Attention is drawn to the recent individual reports of the Attachés to their respective superiors.<sup>1</sup> The respective Chiefs are not as yet aware of this telegram.<sup>2</sup>

GEYR, WASSNER, WENNIGER  
Embassy<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For previous reports by Geyr see documents Nos. 43 and 87 with footnote 3 thereto. A report by Geyr of Mar. 11 on the attitude of War Office circles is not printed (5576/E400399-405). No prior reports on the Rhineland crisis by the Naval or Air Attachés have been found in the Foreign Ministry files.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "Note: A copy of this telegram was transmitted to the Reich War Ministry on the instructions of the State Secretary by Reg. Insp. Niepel. Night-duty, 10:30 p.m., Franke." (ii) "To Depts. II, III and V. [Has been] discussed with the Foreign Minister. He takes a much calmer view of the situation. D[ieckhoff], Mar. 14." Marginal note on another copy (3242/712462): "General von Blomberg will reply. v. N[eurath], Mar. 14." Marginal note on another copy (6710/E506872): "Nervousness not shared here. The Foreign Minister is discussing the matter with Blomberg. To be filed. K[amphoevener], Mar. 14."

<sup>3</sup> For the circumstances relating to the despatch of the document here printed see Geyr von Schweppenberg: *The Critical Years* (London, 1952), pp. 62-63.

## No. 99

6710/E50688

*The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 57 of March 13

BERNE, March 13, 1936—8:30 p.m.

Received March 13—10:40 p.m.

II R 470.

Under the heading: "What is happening on our Northern Frontier?", the *Berner Bund* (No. 121) and other Swiss papers publish the following item: Why does Germany feel constrained to build barracks, subterranean railway stations and fortifications in the Lake Constance

district? Why have enormous quantities of pontoon bridging material been accumulated on Germany's southern frontier, in the Rhine-Lake Constance sector? The Swiss press consequently demands that the construction of frontier defences should be speeded up on the Swiss-German frontier.

As I have heard in confidence from the Federal Military Department, the competent Swiss military authorities are giving these reports their attention and are having them checked as far as possible. For information and to reassure the official Swiss authorities I should be grateful for instructions as to whether I may, in conversation, contradict particularly the report about the accumulation of pontoon bridging material.<sup>1</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>1</sup> Copies of the document here printed were transmitted by Kamphoevener to the Reich War Ministry by express letter of Mar. 14 (6710/E506886), with the request for comment.

## No. 100

6710/E506985

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 43 of March 13

ANKARA, March 13, 1936—9:50 p.m.

Received March 14—2:30 a.m.

II R 493.

I asked Secretary General Numan whether there was any truth in the rumours of an alleged decision reached at Geneva, that the Little Entente and the Balkan Pact should further by every means at their disposal the implementation of the Locarno Pact and of the Covenant of the League of Nations<sup>1</sup> (see my telegram No. 38).<sup>2</sup> Numan was most emphatic in denying that there had been any such decision. No official conference of the aforementioned States had taken place in Geneva, no joint resolutions had been passed, nor had a communiqué (as alleged by Havas) been issued. Nor, indeed, would the Turkish representative have been in a position to approve any resolutions of this nature, for this could only be done on the strength of an express decision by the central Government here. A strongly-worded official *démenti* to that effect was being issued this very evening.<sup>3</sup>

Turkey's attitude, he said, remained the same as expounded to me

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 78.

<sup>2</sup> Of Mar. 12 (6710/E506829); in this Keller reported that the Turkish Minister of the Interior and Acting Foreign Minister, Sükrü Kaya, had described as untrue a B.B.C. report about the alleged Titulescu communiqué.

<sup>3</sup> The text of a statement issued by the official Turkish news agency, Agence Anatolie, was transmitted by Keller in telegram No. 44 of Mar. 13 (6710/E506905-06).



by Tewfik Rüstü on Tuesday evening,<sup>4</sup> namely not to take sides in advance when, as a non-Locarno Power, she had no occasion to do so, [and] as such to contribute, in so far as she was at present able, towards a solution by mediation, since, in her own interests and as a member of the League of Nations, nothing could be further from her mind than to wish the dispute settled by force. Only if negotiations between the Locarno Powers produced no result would Turkey be called upon to make a decision; but in that case she would have no alternative but to follow the path prescribed for her by the Covenant of the League of Nations, and what that would be, he did not yet know. I furthermore explained to him the reasons for our rejection of the proposal for the partial withdrawal of our troops and the import of our promise not to increase the numbers of troops in the Rhineland and not to move troops up to the frontier (cf. your telegram No. 29).<sup>5</sup>

KELLER

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Mar. 10; see document No. 68.

<sup>5</sup> Of Mar. 12 (6710/E506777-78).

## No. 101

6710/E506859-68

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Airgram

BERLIN, March 13, 1936—11:30 p.m.

II R 465.

In amplification of previous information,<sup>1</sup> I would also draw your attention to the following formal points which may acquire great importance as the situation develops.

(1) From Eden's statement in the House of Commons<sup>2</sup> we may assume that Britain, too, does not consider that a case of qualified<sup>3</sup> treaty violation within the meaning of Article 4, Section 3, of the Rhine Pact,<sup>4</sup> has occurred. This has, however, the important consequence, which extends beyond Article 4, Section 3, that military counter measures against Germany by the Locarno Powers are completely ruled out. For the distinction between qualified and ordinary

<sup>1</sup> This would appear to refer not only to the previous instructions printed in this volume, but also to a telephone conversation between Ministerialdirektor Gaus and the Embassy in London; see document No. 103, and footnote 2 thereto. The document here printed, which had first been registered under the number V 3875, was evidently drafted in the Legal Department.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> In the original this phrase reads: "... dass auch England den Fall einer qualifizierten Vertragsverletzung im Sinne von Artikel 4 Ziffer 3 des Rheinpakts nicht als gegeben ansieht".

<sup>4</sup> i.e., of the Treaty of Locarno. For the texts of this and of the articles of the League Covenant and of the Treaty of Versailles mentioned below see Editors' Note, p. 1.

treaty violation applies not only to Article 4 but also to Article 2 of the Rhine Pact, from which latter article it follows that unless a qualified treaty violation has occurred, France and Belgium have no right whatever "to attack, invade or resort to war". Since France and Belgium base the whole of their action on the continued validity of the Rhine Pact, they must also allow its individual provisions to apply to their disadvantage. If, however, France and Belgium are not entitled to take military measures against German territory, then it follows *a fortiori* that there can be no question of any such measures being taken by the guarantors.

(2) The foregoing would not apply only if France and Belgium could invoke one of the exceptions to the renunciation of war or invasion contained in Article 2 of the Rhine Pact. Of these exceptions only Article 2, Section 3, might be relevant in the present case; under this provision military counter measures are permissible when they are taken in accordance with a decision by the Assembly or the Council of the League of Nations. This raises the question of whether, and on the basis of what provisions, the Council could now take a decision which would expressly authorize the taking of military measures on or over German territory. Neither the Rhine Pact nor the Covenant of the League of Nations contains such provisions. Article 16 of the Covenant, and its application indirectly through Article 17, are ruled out for the simple reason that Germany has not "resorted to war". The only other possibility, therefore, is Article 11 of the Covenant. From all the discussions which have taken place within the framework of the League of Nations on this Article, it is, however, certain that the Council may never, under this Article, order or even recommend warlike measures. Were the German frontier to be crossed by force of arms this would, of course, constitute a warlike measure.

(3) From paragraphs (1) and (2) above it therefore emerges beyond all doubt that, in the present circumstances, from the point of view both of the Rhine Pact and of the Covenant of the League of Nations, there can in no circumstance be question of any military action against German territory.

(4) What is the legal position with regard to the possibility that the Council may now recommend measures other than military ones, that is, in particular, measures of an economic and financial nature? The Rhine Pact contains nothing on this subject, so that our opponents would only be able to invoke the general provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and in the present circumstances only Article 11 would be relevant. From all the discussions in the League of Nations on the contingencies which might arise from Article 11, there has, over the years, emerged more and more definitely and clearly the doctrine that all resolutions by the Council relating to this Article must be unanimous, that is, that they require the agreement of the parties to the dispute

as well. The inevitable result has of course been that coercive measures can never be applied at all, as the party affected would naturally never agree to them. The question as to what happens in the case of a dispute involving a non-member has, admittedly, not been clarified. It is self-evident, however, that when applying Article 11, a non-member cannot be treated less favourably than a member, as otherwise the whole character of the procedure, which is designed in the first place to achieve a peaceful settlement, would be radically altered.

(5) It is well known that after the Stresa Conference the French, who considered that this legal position had certain gaps in it, attempted to supplement it by a special procedure against States committing a treaty violation. These efforts, however, came to nothing, primarily because they repeatedly came up against the abovementioned doctrine of the necessity for the consent of all members of the Council, including the parties concerned.

(6) Even if the Council were now prepared to waive the hitherto accepted necessity for the agreement of all Powers concerned, there could still be no question of coercive measures under Article 11. A distinction must be drawn between the case envisaged in Section 1 of Article 11 (war or threat of war) and that envisaged in Section 2 of Article 11 (threat to disturb good understanding [between nations]). At the time when, at the discussions in the League of Nations, the necessity for the consent of all parties had not yet been clearly worked out and when, therefore, the practical possibility of ordering coercive measures was still being borne in mind (above all in the report of March 15, 1927,<sup>5</sup> which the Council accepted), it was always clearly understood that the coercive measures would always have to be in keeping with the magnitude of the danger involved, and that a distinction in principle would have to be made between the cases envisaged in the two sections. As Germany is neither resorting to war nor threatening to do so, only Section 2, which is based on the principle of friendly mediation (*à titre amical*), could be relevant. It is obvious that, *à titre amical*, the severest measures conceivable under Article 11 cannot, in fact, be considered; to these, however, belong economic and financial coercive measures.

(7) France cannot bring up for discussion the existence of a German threat to resort to war, not even indirectly by reference to Article 44 of the Treaty of Versailles. For one thing, this is a provision which concerns only the Powers signatories to Versailles and not the members of the League of Nations as such. But above all, the scope of this provision has been defined and limited by the Locarno Rhine Pact in the manner indicated in paragraph (1) above.

(8) In view of all this it is certain that, from the point of view of the

<sup>5</sup> See League of Nations: *Official Journal*, July 1927, pp. 832-833; the report was considered by the Council on June 15, 1927.



Covenant of the League of Nations, coercive measures against Germany of an economic and financial nature would not be permissible either. But it is also the case, and this must not be forgotten, that the jurisdiction of the League of Nations extends only to members of the League and not to relations between members and a non-member State. Admittedly the other Locarno Powers will not feel themselves to be impeded in any way by this fact, because their claim is that they have been affected by a treaty violation committed by Germany. On the other hand, this argument is of practical significance as regards the Powers not party to Locarno, since, even if the Council should now decide against Germany, they would not thereby be given any legal basis, which, where their relations with Germany were concerned, would justify their taking action against her.

(9) All this serves to justify the view that, even if the Council should decide to find that a treaty violation by Germany had occurred, it would under no circumstances be permitted to follow this up with a recommendation to all members of the League of Nations, or even to the Locarno Powers alone, to take coercive measures of a military, or even of an economic and financial nature, against Germany. If, therefore, the Locarno Powers should decide to take action against Germany on the grounds that a treaty violation had been found, they would be doing so solely on their own responsibility, and solely in their capacity of Locarno Powers, and without being able to base themselves on a mandate from the League of Nations. Nevertheless, the members of the Council who are not parties to Locarno must clearly realize that, merely by finding a treaty violation on Germany's part, they would be assuming a grave responsibility, because, by so doing, they would be giving the Locarno Powers scope for action against Germany and, above all, because they would thus destroy the constructive solution proposed by Germany. Nor would they be able to evade this responsibility by abstaining when the vote was taken in the Council. Even if, in the circumstances, we cannot perhaps count on one or other of the uninvolved members of the Council having the courage actively to support the German point of view, it should still be possible to persuade them to bring up for debate the important questions of procedure indicated above. In so doing they would increase the chances of inducing the Council to take that line which, in the present situation, must be regarded as the only proper one, even from the point of view of the League of Nations itself. Anyone familiar with the practice of the League of Nations knows that in many previous disputes the Council's only expedient has proved to be that of referring the parties to the method of direct negotiations. It has resorted to this method even in cases where it was not at all possible to see how a solution could be reached by negotiation. The present case, however, is quite different, since one of the parties, namely Germany, has already submitted concrete proposals



to the other Powers. The impartial Powers represented on the Council should not disregard the point that Germany's action did not merely consist in the military reoccupation of the Rhineland, but that this reoccupation was accompanied by the most comprehensive proposals for reconstructing European policy. For the Council, when taking their decision, to fix their attention solely on one of these two aspects of the German action, namely the reoccupation of the Rhineland, would be unjustifiable, even from the purely legal point of view.<sup>6</sup>

NEURATH

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<sup>6</sup> Copies of the document here printed were circulated to various European Missions, the Embassy at Ankara and the Consulate at Geneva on Mar. 13 (6710/E506858) and Mar. 16 (6710/E506870).

## No. 102

6710/E506939-40

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

CONFIDENTIAL

No. 46 of March 13

LONDON, March 13, 1936.

Received March 14—10:20 a.m.

II R 481.

The Marquis de Brinon, the well-known Germanophil French journalist, called on me today for a long discussion of the situation, which he described as disturbing.

He thought that, after the French Government's formal statements, it was difficult to see how, without having received some sort of satisfaction, France could now agree to enter into negotiations. He did not know what Flandin's real objective was. But he did know that before leaving for London Flandin had stated that he held a cheque on Britain and he was determined to cash it.

A continuation of the present state of tension, Brinon continued, was undesirable, because it was dangerous. The French people, admittedly, were not yet expecting war, but they were wondering whether it would come. It was therefore necessary to find some way of giving France some degree of satisfaction without at the same time demanding any sort of retreat on Germany's part. Perhaps it would be possible for both Germany and France to undertake to withdraw their troops from their respective frontier areas. I expressed doubt as to whether the French Government, who claimed the right to move as many troops as they liked into their frontier areas, would agree to that. Brinon said he would suggest the idea to Flandin today.

The French General Staff, he continued, were moderate and had in consequence incurred the displeasure of some members of the Cabinet

such as, for example, the well-known Minister of Posts, Mandel. It was thanks to the General Staff that no mobilization had taken place. The General Staff's view was that the French Army was sufficiently strong and well armed to stand firm against any threat from Germany. Its ability to achieve a state of readiness quickly rendered mobilization unnecessary; in any case one did not mobilize unless one was resolved to strike.

Brinon described the present French Government as weak and, for that very reason, not altogether innocuous. He said it was quite likely that, in view of the external danger, a new Government of National Unity would be formed during the coming week, and that while, on the one hand, this could, of course, be regarded as a grave portent, it would, on the other hand, have the advantage that elements from the Right would also come to power and that these, in the last resort, were favourably disposed towards an understanding with Germany. He had recently seen Laval, who inclined towards the view that Germany's advance into the demilitarized zone must not be allowed to lead to war but rather that, whilst fully maintaining France's dignity, it should be made to serve as the starting-point for comprehensive negotiations. The well-known right-wing Deputy, Ybarnegaray, whom he had seen only yesterday, was also advocating an understanding with Germany, admittedly on condition that the acute conflict was entirely eliminated by a conciliatory act on the part of Germany.

On the whole it was evident that Brinon was seriously concerned about the situation and about possible developments.

HOESCH

## No. 103

6710/E506936

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 47 of [March] 13

LONDON, March 13, 1936.

Received March 14—10:20 a.m.

II R 480.

I discussed the legal position with Sir William Malkin<sup>1</sup> today in accordance with the directives discussed by telephone with Gaus.<sup>2</sup>

In brief, my statements were to the effect that, in the circumstances, only the exception No. 3 in Article 2 of the Rhine Pact, namely action in pursuance of a resolution by the Council of the League of Nations, could be for consideration, and that the League Council for its part

<sup>1</sup> Legal Adviser to the Foreign Office. See also document No. 101.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this telephone conversation has been found.

could pass no resolution on sanctions for lack of legal justification.

Sir William listened attentively but was extremely cautious in his replies. He raised two questions only: firstly, what significance I attached, in view of my observations, to Section 2 of Article 4; secondly, whether I had given consideration to Article 1.

I replied to the first question by saying that the obligation to render immediate assistance contained in Article 4, Section 2, naturally also fell within the scope of the restrictions stipulated in Article 2 and could therefore be fulfilled only to the extent permitted by exceptions Nos. 1, 2 or 3 in Article 2. To the second question I replied that Article 1 explicitly laid down that the guarantee therein envisaged was to operate in accordance with the subsequent Articles, including, therefore, Article 2.

Sir William confined himself to taking note of my answers, though he thanked me warmly for my statements and finally said he shared my hope that it might soon be possible to find means to begin negotiations on our proposals.

HOESCH

## No. 104

769/270876

### *Minute by the State Secretary*

[BERLIN,] March 13, [1936].  
zu II M 927 g.<sup>1</sup>

[For the] Foreign Minister.

The day before yesterday the F[ührer] and C[hancellor] forbade publication of the strength of the Rhineland forces—for what reasons I do not know.

I think that it would have a very calming effect were we to make an

<sup>1</sup> II M 927 g. (769/270871-74/2) was a communication, dated Mar. 13, from the Reich War Ministry to Dieckhoff; it read: "On instructions from General Keitel I send you herewith the following enclosures:

"(1) A table of our pre-war strengths on the Franco-Belgian frontiers. [Not printed (769/270872); this table, which included Alsace-Lorraine, gave an approximate total strength of 220,000 men.]

"(2) A table of our forces at present stationed in the demilitarized zone. [Not printed (769/270873); this table gave an approximate total strength of 36,500 men and stated that there were no armoured forces.] It should be pointed out that the militarized police are included in this table, but not the traffic police, including the Landjäger and the like (there is no intention of transferring these last to the Army and they are distributed in like manner throughout the territory of the Reich).

"(3) A table, with map, showing the strength of the troops deployed on the French Eastern frontier. [Not printed (769/270874/1-2); this enclosure gave an approximate total strength of 140,000 men.]

"In drawing up these figures we have naturally not worked them out 'to the last halfpenny' ['nicht mit dem Pfennig' gearbeitet].

"General Keitel requests that you consider these data as having been furnished for your own personal information (and, of course, for that of the State Secretary)."

announcement *now*, possibly to the effect that "It is asserted abroad that there are 60,000-90,000 [men], if not more, in the Rhineland. In fact some (15,000-20,000) [men] have been moved into the Rhineland. Inclusive of the police already there, the whole force now consists of 36,500 men. Before the war 220,000 men were stationed in the same area."

An announcement could, of course, only be made with the consent of the F[ührer] and C[hancellor] as well as of the R[eichs]wehr [*sic*].

BÜLOW

## No. 105

9728/E684701-02

### *Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 13, 1936.

zu II M 941 g.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to the attached minute of March 11.

Enquiries made of Lt. Col. Bruch (Head of the Central Department of the Reich Air Ministry) and Lt. Col. Hanesse (Head of the Attaché Group) reveal that neither of these gentlemen has any more precise information as to the special duties which have been allotted to Herr Neuhausen in Belgrade. The Reich Air Minister's adjutant informed them that "The Minister President had informed the Reich Foreign Minister of the matter. The Reich Foreign Minister was acquainted with Neuhausen as a person."

Neuhausen has been given papers by the Reich Air Minister in which he is described as his special representative for South Eastern Europe.

Lt. Col. Hanesse informs us that the news of his appointment was given only in order that the Foreign Ministry should be informed; he did not think it desirable for the news to be passed on to the Missions abroad.<sup>2</sup>

To be submitted for information via the Acting Director and State Secretary to the Foreign Minister.<sup>3</sup>

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>1</sup> II M 941 g. is the enclosure to the document here printed.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "In my view we ought to inform the Ministers concerned. B[ülow], Mar. 15."

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Submitted to the Foreign Minister. The Foreign Minister requests that the German Ministers concerned be informed. Ko[tze], [Mar.] 15." A despatch dated Mar. 19 (9728/E684704) and addressed for their confidential information to the Heads of Missions in Belgrade, Bucharest, Sofia, Athens and Tirana and copied to the Legation in Budapest reads: "The Reich Air Ministry has informed us here that the Reich Air Minister has appointed Herr Franz Neuhausen in Belgrade as his special representative in South Eastern Europe. Herr Neuhausen has been issued with the appropriate papers by the Reich Air Minister. He is acting on behalf of Reich Minister Göring personally."



[Enclosure]

BERLIN, March 11, 1936.

Referat II Luft.

e.o. II M 941 g.

Lt. Col. Bruch of the Reich Air Ministry informed me today by telephone that the Reich Air Minister had appointed Herr Franz Neuhausen in Belgrade as his special representative for South Eastern Europe.

HEINBURG

## No. 106

6710/E506915-18

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P 14/3.36

WARSAW, March 13, 1936.

[Received March 14].<sup>1</sup>

II R 477.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Polish-French differences of opinion in connection with the German Memorandum.

The following details have been brought to my notice by a well-informed source, who asks me to treat them as confidential; they show how extremely difficult it is for the Polish Government, in the present situation, to reconcile their treaty obligations towards France<sup>2</sup> with the maintenance of good-neighbourly relations with Germany.

As you know, Foreign Minister Beck sent for the French Ambassador, Noël, on the afternoon of March 7, in order to inform him that Poland would fulfil her obligations under the Polish-French Alliance.<sup>3</sup> Immediately afterwards Foreign Minister Beck issued a communiqué for the Polish press drafted by himself personally,<sup>4</sup> which, with complete disregard for the French point of view, stated that Poland was not directly interested in the matter and that her relations with Germany had been definitively regulated by the Agreement of January 1934.<sup>5</sup> Quite justifiably Ambassador Noël considered this communiqué to be in

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E506919-22).

<sup>2</sup> For the Franco-Polish Treaties see document No. 61, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> For Noël's account of this interview see Léon Noël: *L'aggression allemande contre la Pologne* (Paris, 1946), p. 125. For the account given by Beck to Szembek, see Szembek: *Journal*, pp. 166-167.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 67, footnote 5; for an account of the circumstances in which this communiqué was issued see Friedrich Berber (Editor): *Europäische Politik 1933-1938 im Spiegel der Prager Akten*, 3rd Edition (Essen, 1942), No. 59, pp. 57-58.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

flat contradiction to the statement made to him by Foreign Minister Beck, and for that reason he made a *démarche* with the Polish Foreign Minister.<sup>6</sup> Foreign Minister Beck is said to have replied to the French Ambassador's remonstrances, in some embarrassment, that the situation as a whole had not yet been clearly apparent when the communiqué was drafted.

Thereupon, on his own initiative, the French Ambassador called a press conference for Polish journalists at which he made quite clear his disapproval of the line officially prescribed for the Polish press. On this occasion M. Noël also stated that, despite the semi-official Polish communiqué, Polish interests were acutely affected by the occupation of the demilitarized zone, since, in the event of a German attack, the French army would be less able than hitherto to come to Poland's aid by launching an attack on Germany's western frontier. The fact that the French Ambassador called a press conference here in order to put forward, in flat contradiction of the directive issued by the Polish Foreign Ministry, the French point of view, has greatly annoyed the Polish Foreign Ministry and particularly Foreign Minister Beck himself. The action of the French Ambassador has even led to a personal attack on him in the *Kurjer Poranny*, which is close to the Government. Moreover, the only outcome of the French Ambassador's efforts has been that the French point of view has been stressed once more by a few newspapers of the Jewish minority, and of the nationalist opposition, which are in any case anti-German.

From the same source I hear that the Commander in Chief of the Polish Army, General Rydz-Smigly, has sent the French Ambassador, through a confidant, a message which is apparently the result of the Ambassador's remarks about the deterioration of Poland's military situation. Rydz-Smigly is said to have given as the reason for Poland's attitude in the present conflict the fact that, as a result of France's refusal to grant credits, Poland was not adequately armed from the military point of view. For armaments purposes, Poland required a thousand million Złoty, more specifically for the expansion of her aviation, the transfer of the Upper Silesian heavy industry to the interior of the country and for the expansion of her road network. Only when Poland was militarily up to standard would she be able to honour her treaty obligations to the full. Furthermore, France was bound by the Treaty of Alliance, at least morally, to make credits available to the Polish Government for armaments purposes.

Some time ago Ambassador Noël, who has close contacts with Polish military circles, and more especially with those which have been making efforts to get rid of Foreign Minister Beck, urged Paris to grant Poland credits for armaments, but without success. It is to be expected

<sup>6</sup> For Noël's account of this interview see Noël: *L'aggression allemande contre la Pologne*, pp. 136-137.

that Noël will now make renewed efforts in this direction. Indeed, he is said already to have expressed the view that the granting of a French loan to Poland could only be considered if M. Beck were replaced by someone more acceptable to the French.

V. MOLTKE

No. 107

9172/E645335-37

*Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

WARSAW, March 13, 1936.

DEAR HERR ROEDIGER: Many thanks for your letter of today.<sup>1</sup>

In my telegram of March 11 to the [Foreign] Minister,<sup>2</sup> I said that I had considered it necessary myself to broach with Beck the question of the Corridor payments. The reasons for this were as follows:

First, that Beck, in our preceding conversation, had stressed his concern over the transit question. In the same way both Count Szembek and Count Potocki<sup>3</sup> had, in several conversations, emphasized the seriousness of the situation. Information had reached me from another source also about the great agitation in the Cabinet and especially about the annoyance of the Minister President.<sup>4</sup> The main reason for my action was, however, that I had learnt through Count Potocki of a telegram from Lipski that ran somewhat as follows:

Minister President Göring had told him that the Chancellor had entrusted him with the settlement of the Corridor question. He would speak to Herr Schacht immediately after his return from Königsberg.<sup>5</sup> It had been agreed that definite proposals should then be sent immediately to the Polish Government through the Embassy in Warsaw. Herr Göring had added that the Chancellor had been extremely dissatisfied with the way the matter had been handled so far.

Taking all these circumstances into account I thought it right to give M. Beck some indication as to the further efforts of the Reich Foreign Minister in this matter, as I wish as far as possible to dispel the impression which still continues to exist here that the Foreign Ministry is cooperating with Herr Schacht against the Chancellor's policy towards

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (9172/E645333-34). In this Roediger referred to document No. 82 and confirmed that Göring had been instructed to deal with the Corridor payments question. He suggested that, should it be necessary to prevail upon the Polish Government to wait beyond the coming weekend, Moltke could point out that Göring had already intervened in Berlin.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 82.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably Count Józef Potocki, Director of the Western Department of the Polish Foreign Ministry.

<sup>4</sup> M. Zyndram-Kościałkowski.

<sup>5</sup> Göring visited Königsberg on Mar. 12.

Poland, and that Herr Göring is the only person who can help in such difficulties.

As Minister President Kościakowski is to attend a dinner at the Embassy this evening, I will, following your suggestion, take the opportunity of letting him gather, by a few well-chosen words, that it would be better to wait a little before introducing new retaliatory measures.

I hardly need stress the strictly confidential nature of this letter. It would be best to destroy it immediately.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

MOLTKE<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> The draft here printed contains many amendments; a fair copy, without a signature has been filmed as 9172/E645338-40.

## No. 108

6710/E507013-15

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

PARIS, March 14, 1936—[9:10 a.m.].<sup>1</sup>

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

Received March 14—10:35 a.m.

No. 150 of March 14

II R 498.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

I learn from a reliable informant that Déat,<sup>2</sup> together with like-minded politicians, is considering the following possibility for a solution:

There is, they hold, a danger that, owing to her predilection for unfruitful legal argument, France will land herself in an *impasse*. The British proposal for a "symbolic gesture" will not lead anywhere because a middle way acceptable to both parties cannot be found. To continue to pursue this idea further will, therefore, lead to sanctions. A policy of this nature would be intolerable. Logically the acceptance of sanctions against Germany would, at the very least, entail the continuation of sanctions against Italy, since the League of Nations could not impose sanctions against Germany, who has not committed aggression against States members of the League, while at the same time freeing Italy from sanctions. France, whose security is not seriously threatened by remilitarization in its present dimensions and who could content herself with the Council of the League of Nations simply finding that a treaty violation had occurred, would appear in a very unfavourable light were sanctions to be imposed against two great

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris draft (M287/M012031-33).

<sup>2</sup> Marcel Déat, the French Air Minister.



countries. The solution therefore would seem to lie in extending the scope of the discussions, while at first seeking to avoid direct Franco-German negotiations.

Their plan is as follows: One of the Locarno Powers not directly involved in the dispute, i.e., Belgium or Britain, should propose that Locarno be extended to include Germany's eastern neighbours (Czechoslovakia, Austria, Poland), which would presumably accord with the Führer's non-aggression pact offer. Negotiations should at first be conducted officially without Germany, who would, however, have to be kept currently informed unofficially. Whilst not preventing fruitful discussion, this would at first allow both France and Germany officially to maintain their position on the zone question; the delicate question of the "symbolic gestures" could thus be left in abeyance and avoided. As soon as the Powers concerned—with Germany taking part unofficially all the time—had reached agreement, an official proposal would be made to Germany and a general settlement be reached within the framework of the League of Nations. Britain would overcome her aversion to assuming commitments in Central Europe, since, in the present situation, she is confronted with the alternative of either having to participate at least in sanctions against Germany, or of risking the withdrawal of France, the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente from the League of Nations. Italy would likewise agree, since she would thus be obtaining a free hand with Abyssinia. Apart from maintaining the present position during the negotiations, Germany would not have to make any fresh sacrifices, since, to a certain extent, it would be only her own proposals that others were taking over. Moreover, the negotiations might assume a comprehensive form and, if they went well, include the questions of colonies and raw materials.

Déat is of the opinion that this proposal could not emanate from France, but is prepared to advocate it in the Cabinet, if it were to be made by Britain or Belgium. The informant suggested that Germany should make a suggestion to this effect in London.

The informant asserted that Déat did not know that his views were being made known to me.<sup>3</sup>

FORSTER

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<sup>3</sup> The document here printed was transmitted by Renthe-Fink to London for information on Mar. 14 (6710/E507016).

## No. 109

6710/E506875-76

*The State Secretary to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, March 14, 1936—11:45 a.m.

TOP SECRET

[zu] II R 467.<sup>1</sup>

No. 56

For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 45.<sup>1</sup>

As already indicated by the participation of Nevil[le] Chamberlain in the Locarno meeting on Friday morning,<sup>2</sup> it would appear that economic sanctions are being discussed. A delegation there [in London] has asked their Berlin Embassy for a list of the countries with which Germany has concluded barter agreements, and for statistics on German imports of raw materials, including petroleum, and on her imports of these materials from countries not members of the League of Nations, etc.

So far no evidence has been received here of preparations for military sanctions.

BÜLOW

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 98.<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 13; see also Editors' Note, p. 113.

## No. 110

6710/E507007-08

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 14, 1936.

II R 497.

The Greek Minister<sup>1</sup> called on me this morning to inform me, on instructions from his Government, that the Greek Government had no intention of abandoning their neutral attitude with regard to the Locarno dispute. All rumours that Greece approved of the attitude of France and Belgium were therefore untrue. In particular, the familiar Havas report from Geneva about a joint communiqué by the States of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente<sup>2</sup> was completely incorrect. The Greek Government had ascertained that their own delegate,

<sup>1</sup> Alexandros Rizo-Rangabé.<sup>2</sup> See document No. 97.

M. Politis, had not even been in Geneva and that his deputy, M. Rosetti, had merely called on M. Titulescu, who was not even President of the Balkan Entente now. Enquiries made of Titulescu had elicited that the Havas report derived from a statement made by M. Titulescu to a journalist, which, however, was merely intended to convey Titulescu's personal views.

I told M. Rangabé that his information was of great interest to us; we had been very surprised indeed at the Havas report, because it contradicted the assurances which he had previously given us. We were very gratified to learn that the Havas report was not correct. I would at once pass on his information to the Foreign Minister and the Secretary of State.<sup>3</sup>

RENTHE-FINK

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal note on another copy (6710/E507005-06): "H[err] Heinburg: Please take further action. R[enthe]-F[ink], Mar. 14." In a minute of the same date (6710/E507011) Heinburg noted that, as instructed, he had informed Minister von Heeren by telephone of the official Greek announcement (see document No. 97) and of the Agence Anatolie report (see document No. 100, footnote 3), and had asked Heeren to ascertain the Yugoslav Government's attitude to the Geneva communiqué; Heeren was going to report by telegram during the course of the day (see document No. 114).

## No. 111

6710/E506882

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 37

BERLIN, March 14, 1936—12:20 p.m.

[zu] II R 469.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 25.<sup>1</sup>

The over-heated imagination of certain quarters at your end is seeing ghosts. Nowhere is there any serious talk of military sanctions or preparations for war. The despatch of small detachments of the Wehrmacht is merely of a symbolic nature, to signalize the restoration of sovereignty. No troop concentrations on the frontier. No thought of forestalling a French incursion.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 93.

## No. 112

6710/E507230

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 58

BERLIN, March 14, 1936—1:30 p.m.

e.o. II R 533.

You are authorized to state, in repudiation of exaggerated press rumours concerning German troops in the Rhineland, that, inclusive of police, there are at present 36,500 men stationed in the former demilitarized zone. This force includes neither armoured units nor bomber aircraft (only fighters, i.e., for defensive purposes). Facing them on the French side are some 140,000 troops.<sup>1</sup>

NEURATH<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An additional sentence reading: "The peace-time strength of the German garrisons in approximately the same area before 1914 amounted to 220,000 men," was deleted before despatch. For the text of the statement issued by the German Embassy on Mar. 15 see *The Times* of Mar. 16, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> In a note of Mar. 14 (6710/E507231-32) Neurath recorded that Blomberg had approved the communication of this information to Britain. See also document No. 104.

## No. 113

6710/E507022-23

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 34 of March 14

ROME, March 14, 1936—2:50 p.m.

Received March 14—6:00 p.m.

II R 500.

With reference to your telegram No. 46 of [March] 13.<sup>1</sup>

I held language with Suvich today in the sense of your instructions.

On point (1) (alleged prior contact with Britain), he admitted that this impression had at first arisen, purely, of course, on account of our willingness to return to the League of Nations. In view of the statements made only recently by the Führer to an Italian personage, this decision had come as such a surprise that at first there had seemed to be no other possible explanation for it; but in the meanwhile this assumption had been discarded, and he was, of course, glad to take full note of my communication.

On point (2) (present Italian policy in the Locarno question and Germany's future policy in the League of Nations), he observed that he could only repeat<sup>2</sup> that Italy would not take part in any action against

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 94.

<sup>2</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 603, and the present volume, document No. 5.



Germany on account of the abrogation of Locarno or the reoccupation of the zone. Here I interjected that this therefore meant [she would] not [take part] in resolutions which might serve as a basis for sanctions. Suvich said that the Locarno Powers might perhaps be unable to avoid finding that a *de facto* violation of the treaty had occurred. Indeed, Italy herself was obliged to admit to a *de facto* treaty violation where the Abyssinian question was concerned. But why such violation had occurred and what reasons there were in its justification, and consequently what conclusions were to be drawn therefrom, was quite another matter. In this sense he could indeed assure me that Italy would not be a party to any resolutions which might form the basis for sanctions against Germany.

Describing the present situation, Suvich said that the British were showing a tendency to spin the matter out a bit: On the one hand a certain sympathy for France's attitude was gaining ground among the British public, which had at first been entirely opposed to the French point of view, and on the other hand Britain was hoping that France would gradually calm down and become somewhat more conciliatory. In this way Britain hoped to get nearer to a solution, her aim being to keep the German and the Italian problems entirely separate, first solving the former and then turning her attention to the latter. In this connection Britain remained *opposed* to sanctions against Germany and *in favour* of sanctions against Italy. I interjected that while France would be glad to abolish the sanctions imposed on Italy, she wanted them imposed on Germany. Suvich confirmed this, but thought that the logical conclusion, namely sanctions either against both or against neither, could hardly be . . . (group mutilated) into practice.<sup>3</sup> Britain's difficulty lay in the fact that the abolition of the sanctions imposed on Italy would be bound to have the effect of a defeat for Britain. For Italy the situation was complicated by the fact that if she adopted a downright negative attitude towards the French policy over the German question, she would be in danger of losing any French support in the Abyssinian affair (see my report No. 1363 of March 12).<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless Italy would adhere to her basic standpoint as set forth above.<sup>5</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>3</sup> The Rome draft (M281/M011556-59) here reads "... be put into practice."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 89.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 33 of even date (6710/E506996) Hassell reported: "During my today's visit Suvich complained about reports in the German press according to which our offer to return to the League of Nations had caused displeasure in Rome as it nullified Italy's threat of withdrawal. Since the Italian press had, on instructions, stringently avoided making such statements, they were particularly out of place when made by the German side. Suvich cited reports appearing in the *National-Zeitung* of Mar. 8, the *München [er Neueste Nachrichten]* of Mar. 9, and the *Hamburger Nachrichten* of Mar. 8, which last also spoke incorrectly and irrelevantly of the unconditional acceptance by Mussolini of the Geneva peace ultimatum. The correspondents here will be admonished from this end. Please exert influence on the editors at your end." This telegram was initialled by Counsellor Braun v. Stumm of the Press Department on Mar. 16 and is marked in his handwriting: "The press is informed."

## No. 114

6710/E507025

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 27 of March 14

BELGRADE, March 14, 1936—3:30 p.m.

Received March 14—6:50 p.m.

II R 501.

The Minister President, who invited me to call on him today, spontaneously declared, with regard to the Geneva communiqué on the attitude of the Little Entente and the Balkan Entente towards the Rhine[land] question,<sup>1</sup> that publication had taken place without Yugoslavia's concurrence and that in point of fact it was completely untrue. He had caused all the Governments concerned to be so informed immediately and had had the Reuter *démenti* published through the Ayala Agency.<sup>2</sup>

Asking me to treat what he was about to say as strictly confidential, Stojadinović then defined his own attitude as follows:

He was, he said, fully determined not in any circumstances to participate in sanctions of any kind against Germany. Yugoslavia would probably have to associate herself with a formal condemnation of the German action by the League of Nations, but she would reject sanctions as being unjustified and harmful and as constituting a threat to peace. In order to be able to uphold this attitude *vis-à-vis* France, he had, on the other hand, assured France that, should Germany make an unprovoked attack through [*sic*] France, Yugoslavia would stand at France's side. He had reason to believe that the Yugoslav views on the question of sanctions were shared by Greece, Poland and Turkey. In view of her links with Russia, Turkey would, admittedly, be at great pains to try and disguise this by bringing about a juridical condemnation of Germany.

The Minister President then hinted at the possibility that the mere fact of Yugoslavia's attitude might cause the French once again to seek a *rapprochement* with Italy at Yugoslavia's expense; and he expressed the hope that, should this occur, Yugoslavia would find support in Germany.

Summing up, the Minister President stated that, in the treatment of the German-French dispute, Yugoslavia would associate herself as far as possible with the action of Britain, in whose mediatory activity she saw the best guarantee of peace.

HEEREN

<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 78 and 97.

<sup>2</sup> The official Yugoslav news agency. Heeren reported further on this matter in telegram No. 29 of Mar. 17 (6710/E507353).

## No. 115

6710/E507027

*The Minister in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 29 of March 14

STOCKHOLM, March 14, 1936—6:55 p.m.

Received March 14—8:45 p.m.

II R 502.

The Cabinet Secretary of the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup> mentioned to me in the course of conversation that, in the Scandinavian countries, it was felt that the necessary basis for sanctions against Germany on account of the occupation of the Rhineland was at present lacking.

The Naval Attaché<sup>2</sup> has learnt from a trustworthy source (the Adjutant to the Swedish Defence Minister) that the Swedish Defence Minister<sup>3</sup> has said that the German reoccupation of the Rhineland zone was no reason for serious counter-measures on the part of France. The informant added that the Swedish Socialist press did not reflect the opinion of the Government here.

From other information received by the Legation it would appear that, although Swedish Government circles regard the situation as very serious and are concerned about further developments, they are, nevertheless, hoping that any action against Germany may be avoided. The majority in Parliament are said to hold the same view.

WIED

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<sup>1</sup> Christian E. Günther, Secretary General of the Swedish Foreign Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> Capt. W. Steffan.

<sup>3</sup> I. T. Vennerström.

## No. 116

6710/E506978-79

*An Official of Department II to the Legation in Switzerland*

Telegram

No. 34

BERLIN, March 14, 1936—9:40 p.m.

zu II R 490.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 57 of March 13.<sup>2</sup>

The following comment by the Reich War Ministry on Swiss press reports regarding German military installations on the northern frontier is sent you for information and for you to make, at your discretion, suitable use of it.

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<sup>1</sup> II R 490 is not printed (6710/E506977); this was the Reich War Ministry's reply of Mar. 14 to the Foreign Ministry's enquiry of the same date (see document No. 99, footnote 1).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 99.

- 1) Construction of barracks is in progress
  - at Villingen (since 1935),
  - at Donaueschingen (since 1935),
  - at Radolfzell (also since some considerable time),
  - and at Constance (since four weeks ago).

No installations of any sort are being constructed by the Luftwaffe.

- 2) The Labour Service is carrying out the following peacetime [non-military] works:

At Wies (16 km north-north-east of Lörrach)—with 150 men, road reconstruction, building a barrack camp.

At Amrigschwand (10 km north of Waldshut)—with 150 men, building forest roads, tree-felling and installing a water supply.

At Constance—150 men employed in cultivation.

At Überlingen—150 men on road building and water works.

At Grasbeuren (11 km south-south-east of Überlingen)—150 men on drainage work.

- 3) It was not possible to ascertain anything in respect of the Engineers' material [*Pioniergerät*]. The most southerly Engineer Battalion [*Pionier Batl.*] (Pforzheim), is not concerned. No Engineers' material has been sent to Constance recently.

KAMPHOEVENER

## No. 117

4619/E198278-79

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 14, 1936.

RM 230.

The Italian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> called on me today and left with me the instructions to the Italian Ambassador in London<sup>2</sup> as to how he should act in respect of sanctions. These instructions are *verbatim* as follows:

"In the situation in which Italy finds herself placed since November 18, 1935,<sup>3</sup> she declares that she is unable to agree to any measures, even of a moral character, which might open the way to the application of sanctions."

I asked the Ambassador whether this meant that Italy would vote against any possible sanctions resolution in the Council of the League of Nations or would merely abstain from voting. The Ambassador gave me an evasive reply.

To my further question as to whether agreements had not already

<sup>1</sup> Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>2</sup> Dino, Count Grandi.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the date of the imposition of sanctions against Italy.



been concluded between France and Italy, whereby France declared herself ready to advocate raising sanctions against Italy provided that Italy, for her part, would associate herself with the measures against Germany, the Ambassador, referring to the instructions quoted above, declared that this was not the case.

Finally the Ambassador also expressed the wish that Italy's attitude in this matter might receive appreciative recognition in the German press as well.<sup>4</sup> I replied that as soon as Grandi had acted in London in accordance with these instructions I would have appropriate directives issued to the press.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>4</sup> In a further memorandum—RM 231—of even date (4619/E198280) Neurath recorded that Attolico had complained about a leader in the *Frankfurter Zeitung* of Mar. 13 pointing out the difference between the German reoccupation of the Rhineland and the Italian campaign against Abyssinia; the Ambassador deplored such comparisons, and had received a telegram from Mussolini concerning an unspecified German paper which had referred contemptuously to the effect upon Italy of the German declaration of readiness to return to the League.

## No. 118

939/299255

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 14, 1936.

[II R 551.]<sup>1</sup>

The South African Minister<sup>2</sup> called on me today in order to suggest, in moving terms, that the Führer and Chancellor should cut short the period of tension by making a statement in which he placed his constructive peace programme in the forefront. War, he [the Minister] said, was of course unthinkable, but this period of uncertainty was harmful both politically and economically.

I explained to Mr. Gie that our previous supplementary declarations had been misunderstood and had been interpreted as a sign of weakness. For this reason his valuable suggestion must be held over until such time as feelings had calmed down. As he had remarked that he was a close personal friend of the Australian representative in London,<sup>3</sup> I explained to him that the Council of the League of Nations was in no way entitled to resolve upon sanctions and should indeed beware of accepting recommendations which might afford the Locarno Powers a pretext for any form of action against Germany, as we should be obliged to regard this last as hostile treatment.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E507285).

<sup>2</sup> Dr. S. F. N. Gie.

<sup>3</sup> S. M. Bruce, Australian High Commissioner in London and President of the Council of the League of Nations.

[EDITORS' NOTE: The Council of the League of Nations met in London on March 14 to consider the French and Belgian communications of March 8 (see Editors' Note, p. 45). In a telegram received in Berlin at 5 p.m. (6710/E506997), the Secretary General of the League transmitted the Council's invitation to the German Government, as Contracting Party to the Locarno Treaty, to take part in the examination by the Council of the French and Belgian communications. For the text of Avenol's telegram see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 316.]

## No. 119

3242/712450

*Unsigned Minute*<sup>1</sup>

We are faced with the following alternatives:

(1) We accept the invitation of the Council,<sup>2</sup> which relates exclusively to the complaint of Germany's breach of treaty and not to the constructive German proposals. With these proposals the Council is not competent to deal. In the event of our acceptance we should first have to put questions concerning our equality of rights.

(2) Rejection of the invitation. This could be based on the contention that we have already said all that there is to be said on the subject dealt with in the Council (the Führer's speech, memoranda), [and] that [we] attach primary importance to our constructive proposals with which the Council is not competent to deal.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This minute is unsigned and undated.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note above.

<sup>3</sup> The conclusion of this sentence, from "that [we] place . . ." is added in Neurath's handwriting. On another copy (63/43826) the same passage was added in Bülow's handwriting. A note in Neurath's handwriting (3242/712449), filed with the document here printed, reads: "1) Equality of rights. 2) When the matter of the Council has been clarified, discuss the proposals with us immediately."

## No. 120

6710/E507241-42

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

No. C IV/4a

Commercial Department

PRAGUE, March 14, 1936.

Received March 16.

II R 536.

Subject: Czechoslovak concern regarding the effects of sanctions against Germany.

Business circles here are following with the greatest concern and disquiet the negotiations at present in progress in Paris and in London regarding the measures to be taken by the Locarno Signatories against Germany.

Were sanctions to be applied against Germany this would be regarded here as an almost unbearable blow to the Czechoslovak economy, and as one of such far-reaching import that the sanctions against Italy do not give even an approximate idea of its effects. Germany is not only Czechoslovakia's largest market, but is also, at the same time, her biggest supplier. It is also, so they feel, to be feared that Czechoslovakia's outstanding claims against Germany would be jeopardized; these, apart from investments [in Germany], amount to 500 million Czech Crowns—namely, 300 million Czech Crowns frozen in the clearing account and 200 million Czech Crowns' worth of balances in Czechoslovakia's favour in other accounts.

It is further feared here that even after such sanctions had been raised Czechoslovakia's opportunities for sales to Germany would be lessened, since it seemed likely that not all countries would take part in sanctions and that those which did not would, after the abolition of sanctions, continue to compete with Czechoslovakia.

The possibilities of finding substitute markets are thought here to be extremely slight, if only by reason of Czechoslovakia's geographic position.

According to calculations made here on the basis of the 1935 figures, Czechoslovakia would, in the event of her taking part in sanctions, be obliged to forgo nearly 15 per cent, that is about 1,200 million Czech Crowns, of her total exports, which amount to approximately 8,000 million Czech Crowns.

As far as imports are concerned, nearly 1,200 million Czech Crowns, that is about 18 per cent, would be lost.

To switch the economy to a different pattern of imports would involve great difficulties, since it would be very hard to find substitutes for German machinery, instruments, and the like.

Despite these grave anxieties about the Czechoslovak economy, there is, however, in our view, no doubt that the Czechoslovak Government, as France's most faithful follower, would unreservedly apply any League of Nations resolution concerning sanctions.

EISENLOHR

## No. 121

7610/E507033-35

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

LONDON, March 15, 1936—1:20 a.m.

PRIORITY

Received March 15—4:30 a.m.

No. 48 of March 14

II R 504.

I have got into touch with Madariaga<sup>1</sup> (Spain) and Edwards<sup>2</sup> (Chile), while Bismarck has spoken to the Poles.

All three are agreed in thinking that, whilst the Council of the League of Nations will indeed unanimously find that Germany has committed a breach of treaty, the Council will otherwise not be inclined to permit itself without further ado to be made by the French into an instrument of French policy. All three representatives were at one in emphasizing how extremely important for Germany's own interests it would be for Germany to accept the invitation of the Council of the League of Nations<sup>3</sup> and to send a representative forthwith [*alsbald*]. In this connection they said that at its secret session today the Council had been at great pains to frame the invitation in the form most acceptable to Germany, and Flandin had been alone in his cool attitude towards it. The Council would, therefore, regard it as unfriendly and even as a slight were Germany to refuse. Quite apart from this, however, the presence of a German representative, and the personal contact thus made possible, would create an entirely different atmosphere. The mood of certain sections of the Council, so Edwards assured me, was much more favourable towards Germany than we believed. A number of Council members, including all the South Americans, who in general support Germany's stand against Bolshevism to the full, were by no means disposed to begin a new sanctions campaign now, but were, on the contrary, convinced that it was the task of the Council to endeavour to create peace and understanding. Even Madariaga warmly supported our sending a German representative and took the view that any possible disadvantages resulting from the perhaps inevitable clash between the German representative and the French and Russian ones would be removed by the advantages of the chance of holding a general and direct discussion.

The Polish Delegation take the same view and regard the appointment

<sup>1</sup> Salvador de Madariaga, Spanish representative at the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations in London.

<sup>2</sup> Agustin Edwards, Chilean Ambassador in London and Chilean representative at the meeting of the League Council.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 157.



of a German representative as something that we simply cannot refuse.

Madariaga, who, as you are aware, was Ambassador in Paris<sup>4</sup> and maintains friendly relations with French statesmen, supplied the following details about the French view:

In reply to his appeals to reason Flandin had repeatedly said that Germany's alleged breach of treaty rendered Germany's new treaty offers worthless, as one could no longer trust the German Government. The French were, therefore, determined to bargain for new guarantees. On my asking what Flandin was really after, Madariaga clearly hinted that one ultimate objective might well be the conclusion of a military alliance with Britain against Germany.

To prevent this outcome or other undesirable developments, Madariaga made two proposals, which I declined as unacceptable: Firstly, a proposal that Germany should undertake not to fortify the Rhineland zone for, perhaps, five years, and secondly, a suggestion that Germany should agree to a retrospective appeal to the Hague Court of Arbitration in the matter of the Franco-Soviet Russian Alliance.

I declined these proposals, and I also decisively declined all thought of a further "psychological gesture" by Germany. On the other hand, I continued to emphasize that Germany's action constituted a whole and that our "gesture" was indeed contained in our so extremely far-reaching proposals.

Edwards said (as did the Polish representative) that Flandin's speech today,<sup>5</sup> which had been cold and harsh, had left a thoroughly bad impression. On the other hand, the moderate and heartfelt statement by the Belgian Minister President<sup>6</sup> had made a deep impression. From what he said it could be seen that van Zeeland was striving, not for the imposition of sanctions, but for a solution by way of agreement. Edwards thinks that if the German representative, having once disposed of the inevitably polemical part of his statement, were warmly to highlight the constructive side of the German proposals, he could be sure of an enthusiastic response from the Council. He [Edwards] also emphasized that the British Government undoubtedly wished a German representative to be sent.

After these urgent representations by the three Council Powers aforesaid, and on mature reflection, I have come to the conclusion that the Reich Government should accept the invitation of the Council of the League of Nations. Even though the German representative will not be able to prevent a finding that Germany has committed a breach of treaty, yet his presence and personal advocacy of our peace programme

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<sup>4</sup> From 1932 to 1934.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., at the Ninety-first (Extraordinary) Session of the League Council on Mar. 14; for the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, Pt. II, pp. 312-314.

<sup>6</sup> See *ibid.*, pp. 314-315.

will undoubtedly create a different atmosphere in the Council and will render the aggressive behaviour of Flandin, the poison brew prepared by Litvinov, and the intrigues of Titulescu, all the more unpleasing to the other Members of the Council.

HOESCH

## No. 122

6710/E507038-39

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 49 of March 14

LONDON, March 15, 1936—2:06 a.m.

Received March 15—4:30 a.m.

II R 505.

Today, too, there has been no relaxation of tension in the general situation. If the press has adopted a somewhat more tranquil tone today, this is only because it has without exception been endeavouring in its own familiar fashion earnestly to appeal to Germany for a symbolic gesture of withdrawing troop detachments and thus making a psychological contribution to the solution of the crisis. At the same time, indeed, many voices have admittedly been raised to express the British people's aversion to allowing this crisis to develop into a world conflagration. I hear that Neville Chamberlain, too, amongst a circle of his friends, spoke clearly in terms of the British Government in all circumstances preventing the outbreak of war. But on the other hand there is no mistaking the fact that the French, by reason of the existing commitments and supported in particular by Article 4 Section 2 of the Rhineland Pact, have got Britain firmly grasped by the throat and that, pointing to the pressure put on France during the sanctions campaign against Italy, they intend, by insistent pressure and threats, to make the British Government come to heel.

The British position is rendered still more difficult since, as I learn from League of Nations quarters, the British Government, in logical continuation of their policy, are compelled to insist upon the maintenance of sanctions against Italy, and thus, of course, to provide France with yet another lever in demanding the same energetic action against Germany. In view of this state of affairs and Britain's sensitiveness to accusations of unreliability, the French position *vis-à-vis* Britain appears to be a strong one and, as I have already reported, this may have a decisive effect.

If France means to push things to the point of using force against Germany and should she decide, if need be, that she will threaten to act alone, then it is to be feared that Britain will ultimately be forced

to follow suit. Flandin, too, can scarcely be in any doubt about this. On the other hand, he must also consider how great are the impediments to be overcome among both the British people and world opinion. In any case this seems to open up thoroughly dangerous prospects.

For the moment, however, it seems to me that on balance there are more signs that Flandin's ultimate objective is not so much to force Britain into a joint fight against Germany as rather to blackmail her into concluding a military alliance with France against Germany. Madariaga's statements to me today, which I have already reported,<sup>1</sup> seem to confirm this. But for the time being Britain is still holding out against this too, since the conclusion of such an alliance, and the indirect contact which it must inevitably entail with the Franco-Russian Alliance, would in fact mean the encirclement of Germany and make impossible negotiations along the lines of the German proposals.

The situation this evening, therefore, seems to be still completely open, and developments, even of the gravest nature, still do not seem to be beyond the bounds of possibility.

HOESCH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 121.

## No. 123

6710/E507003-04

### *The Foreign Minister to the Secretary General of the League of Nations*

Telegram en clair

BERLIN, March 15, 1936—7:05 p.m.

II R 496<sup>1</sup> [Ang.] I.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of March 14,<sup>1</sup> in which you inform me that the Council of the League of Nations invites the German Government to take part in the examination of the question submitted to the Council by the Belgian and French Governments.

The German Government are in principle prepared to accept the Council's invitation. They assume in this connection that their representative will take part on equal terms with the representatives of the Powers represented on the Council in the discussions and decisions of the Council. I should be obliged if you would confirm this.

The German Government must further draw attention to the following fundamental consideration. Their action, which has given the Belgian and French Governments occasion to summon the Council, is not restricted to the restoration of German sovereignty in the

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<sup>1</sup> II R 496: was the number given to Avenol's telegram of Mar. 14, see Editors' Note, p. 157.

Rhineland zone, but is combined with comprehensive concrete proposals for a new assurance of peace in Europe. The German Government regard the political action which they have taken as a whole, the component parts of which must not be separated from one another. For this reason the German Government can participate in the Council's proceedings only if they are assured that the Powers concerned are prepared to enter into negotiations forthwith [*alsbald*]<sup>2</sup> on the German proposals. The German Government will, with this object, place themselves in touch with His Britannic Majesty's Government, under whose Presidency the Powers concerned in the Rhine Pact of Locarno are met together for discussions in London.

The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs  
FREIHERR VON NEURATH

<sup>2</sup> It was authoritatively stated in Berlin on Mar. 16 that the word *alsbald*, which had been translated as "forthwith", in the official League translation (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 316), ought rather to be interpreted as "in due course" or "in normal sequence" (cf. *The Times* of Mar. 17, 1936). No documents on the problems of translation caused by the word *alsbald* have been found in the files.

## No. 124

6710/E507044-45

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. 61 of [March] 15

BERLIN, March 15, 1936—8:01 p.m.  
e.o. II R 508.

On Saturday evening<sup>1</sup> the British Ambassador, on instructions from his Government, made the following statement to me in confidence:<sup>2</sup>

"His Majesty's Government earnestly trust that the German Chancellor will accept the invitation<sup>3</sup> which has been addressed to the German Government by the Council of the League of Nations to send a representative to the meeting of the Council in London. We should regard the presence of such a representative as affording an invaluable opportunity of establishing direct contact with the other<sup>4</sup> Governments. For this reason we earnestly trust that the Chancellor will be able to send a representative with the fullest authority and knowledge of the Chancellor's mind."

On Sunday evening I gave the British Ambassador a copy of our

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Mar. 14; no other record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> The paragraph which follows is in English in the original and is identical with an undated memorandum (6710/E506998) which bears the marginal note: "Handed over by the Brit[ish] Ambassador as a Minute [*Notiz*], v. N[eurath], Mar. 15."

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 157.

<sup>4</sup> In the document cited in footnote 2 above, the word "four" has been inserted at this point, in English, in Neurath's handwriting.



reply to Avenol<sup>5</sup> and told him that we first [*zunächst*] awaited a reply from the British Government to the last paragraph of our telegram to Avenol.<sup>6</sup>

As soon as this reply and the reply to be expected from Avenol have been received here in a satisfactory form, Ambassador von Ribbentrop will be sent as the Reich Government's representative to the Council, accompanied by Dieckhoff,<sup>7</sup> Woermann,<sup>8</sup> Schmieden<sup>9</sup> and necessary personnel.

The reply to Avenol will be communicated to the press at midday on Monday.

NEURATH

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 123, the text of which had been repeated to the Embassy in London as telegram en clair No. 60 of Mar. 15 (6710/E507001-02).

<sup>6</sup> No other record of Neurath's conversation with Phipps on Mar. 15 has been found, nor has any record been found of an interview on Mar. 15 between Hitler and Phipps (cf. *The Times* of Mar. 16, 1936, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. I, p. 251, and *Ambassador Dodd's Diary 1933-1938* (London, 1941), p. 329).

<sup>7</sup> Hans Heinrich Dieckhoff, Ministerialdirektor in charge of Departments II and III in the German Foreign Ministry.

<sup>8</sup> Senior Counsellor Ernst Woermann of the Legal Department.

<sup>9</sup> Counsellor C. A. G. Werner von Schmieden of Department II.

## No. 125

6710/E507113

### *The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 59 of March 15

WASHINGTON, March 15, 1936—9:46 p.m.

Received March 16—7:55 a.m.

II R 523.

The serious view of the situation in Europe taken by the State Department, which was reflected in the stopping of all leave for American Missions in Europe, has now been modified. There is less anxiety now, particularly since the invitation extended to us to take part in the London discussions.<sup>1</sup> It is still hoped that Britain will succeed in finding a solution. But even if this should not be the case—and this would be greatly regretted—sanctions are now thought to be less likely; on the contrary it is believed that Britain would be driven, allegedly by our intransigence, into the arms of France, so that France would have achieved what she has been striving for since the end of the war, namely, a military guarantee alliance [*militärisches Garantiebündnis*] with Britain. The restoration of the Stresa front is also regarded as a possibility.

The press, too, has become calmer. It criticizes Germany for not

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 157.

doing anything to support Britain's efforts at mediation. Although its comments on the Führer's speeches<sup>2</sup> are in the main correct, the press in general has violently attacked the way the election campaign<sup>3</sup> is being presented and draws parallels with the "shining armour" terminology used before the war. The opinion is also expressed that, for the sake of something which would sooner or later have fallen into our laps anyway, we have now lost not only our remaining friends, but also Britain's and Italy's guarantee of our security, and are now facing an isolation which will entail great misery and untold sacrifice.

This disapproving attitude has recently been fostered by the very marked sympathy shown for Belgium, who, it is alleged, in view of the fact that she is not party to the Franco-Russian Treaty, has been badly hit through no fault of her own, and because she is held to have put forward her case with great moderation.

LUTHER

<sup>2</sup> The reference is evidently to Hitler's speeches in the Reichstag on Mar. 7 (see Editors' Note, p. 31), at Karlsruhe on Mar. 12 (see document No. 85, footnote 8) and at Munich on Mar. 14 (for extracts see *The Times* and *The Manchester Guardian* of Mar. 16, 1936).

<sup>3</sup> Following the dissolution of the Reichstag (see document No. 9), elections were being held in Germany.

## No. 126

6710/E507046-47

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 52 of March 15

LONDON, March 15, 1936—10:28 p.m.

Received March 16—3:00 a.m.

II R 509.

Today I had exhaustive conversations with the Danish Foreign Minister, Munch, and the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck.

As Herr Dieckhoff has already been informed by telephone,<sup>1</sup> Munch was emphatic in urging that Germany ought to accept the invitation of the Council of the League of Nations.<sup>2</sup> He asked me to communicate this to Berlin.

In this connection the Minister stated that he did not think that the Council of the League of Nations would be able to initiate any major action designed to bring about a solution. The situation was too difficult for that. In his opinion the Council would unanimously find that Germany had committed a breach of treaty, but beyond that would not be able to produce much in the way of practical results. A vote of censure, which might be proposed, he would himself consider inexpedient

<sup>1</sup> No record of this telephone conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 157.

and, indeed, he said it was very doubtful whether it would come to that. In this connection he recalled that last year, too, he had not voted for the Geneva vote of censure<sup>3</sup> after Germany's introduction of conscription. He was, the Minister continued, averse to the imposition of sanctions against Germany. In any case a legal basis for this was lacking, since Article 16 did not apply, and the deliberations of the Committee of Thirteen,<sup>4</sup> set up last year to define the sanctions to be taken against a treaty-breaking State, had not led to any definite results.

In these circumstances, and in view of the limited scope for action open to the Council, the dispute would slip back into the hands of the Locarno Powers and would be extended to include the problem of "immediate assistance" arising from Article 4, Section 2,<sup>5</sup> on which the Locarno Powers would have to reach agreement. If no German representative were present, then—apart from the general displeasure which a German refusal would cause—it was impossible to see how negotiations could come about, and there was the danger that the crisis would drag on unsolved, with all the grave anxieties which that would entail.

Furthermore, Munch drew attention to the difficulties of France's position, whose marked intransigence would be extremely difficult to transform into readiness to negotiate. I retorted that, in other words, we always came back to the question of what Flandin was really after—a question to which Munch did not know the answer either.

The Polish Foreign Minister also spoke about the League of Nations' invitation to Germany and asked me to inform the Foreign Minister that he would advise against a refusal. He would not indeed permit himself to proffer advice on the form which our acceptance should take, and must naturally leave the decision as to whether Germany wished to be represented officially or only unofficially entirely to the Reich Government. Some sort of representation would, however, be advisable.

Otherwise the Minister was somewhat reticent and obviously at pains not to commit himself in any way. He stated in confidence, however, that in any case he would not vote for the imposition of sanctions. He also said that if the question of Germany's fidelity to treaties should be discussed, he would state that Poland's experience in this respect had been good and that she had confidence in the agreements she had concluded with Germany. With regard to France's position, he said that French domestic events exerted a very great in-

<sup>3</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 65.

<sup>4</sup> The Committee of Thirteen had been appointed by the League Council on Sept. 26, 1935, to make a report on the facts of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute and such recommendations as it considered proper. For its reports of Oct. 5, 1935, and Jan. 22, 1936, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1935, pp. 1605-1619, and *ibid.*, February 1936, p. 106, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., of the Treaty of Locarno; see Editors' Note, p. 1.

fluence on Flandin's attitude. Pressure from all the Communist and Communist-associated elements was great. Litvinov and his tribe were also indulging in a spate of anti-German agitation. What Flandin was ultimately after was not clear to him either. But in any case the situation as a whole was extremely difficult and could eventually only be straightened out by negotiations with Germany.

HOESCH

## No. 127

6710/E507270

### *The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

Cape No. 10 of March 16

CAPE TOWN, March 16, 1936—4:22 p.m.

Received March 16—5:30 p.m.

II R 546.

With reference to my telegram Cape No. 9 of March 13.<sup>1</sup>

Yesterday I learned privately from Secretary of State Bodenstein<sup>2</sup> that, according to information reaching the Union Government from London, the situation at the end of last week had been extremely serious. Within the British Cabinet there was a strong trend in favour of complete support for France in proceeding most drastically against Germany. On Friday<sup>3</sup> the High Commissioner in London<sup>4</sup> had telephoned to Cape Town that this trend was gaining ascendancy and that Britain was about to endorse a policy which must lead to war. Thereupon a telegram, drafted personally by General Hertzog,<sup>5</sup> was sent to the British Government, supporting Germany with the utmost vigour and expressly condemning the French attitude. Bodenstein said that never before had he seen a political document couched in such sharp terms. He added, as his private opinion, that the danger was not yet past; Germany, by making the gesture, suggested by the British Foreign Secretary, of a partial and temporary withdrawal of troops,<sup>6</sup> could assist other trends in the British Cabinet to gain ascendancy without herself giving up anything.<sup>7</sup>

WIEHL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 95.

<sup>2</sup> H. D. J. Bodenstein, Secretary of State in the South African Ministry of External Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Mar. 13. <sup>4</sup> C. T. de Water.

<sup>5</sup> South African Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 81.

<sup>7</sup> The document here printed was repeated to the Consulates General at Sydney and Montreal on Mar. 17 as telegrams Nos. 19 and 11 respectively (6710/E507271). In telegram No. 19 of Mar. 19 (6710/E507499) the Consul General at Montreal reported that he had learned *sub rosa* that Hertzog's telegram was known to the Canadian Government, and that the Canadian Under Secretary for External Affairs had expressed the utmost anxiety about the course of the crisis. Montreal telegram No. 19 was repeated as telegram No. 14 to Cape Town (6710/E507501).



## No. 128

6710/E507268

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 8 of March 16

THE HAGUE, March 16, 1936—6:12 p.m.

Received March 16—7:30 p.m.

II R 545.

The Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup> told me today that he would probably be able to hand me the Dutch reply to the German offer concerning Holland's acceding to a non-aggression pact,<sup>2</sup> which he still had to submit to the Queen, in a few days' time.

From what I know of feeling here, the reply will express gratitude for the invitation to accede, but will otherwise draw attention to Holland's traditional policy of independence and will, in particular, decline to join a treaty which imposes any sort of obligation on Holland in the event of a conflict between other Powers.

As regards the general situation, the Foreign Minister said he did not believe in either war or sanctions. If the latter were nevertheless to be imposed, Holland would in no circumstances cooperate, since she was only interested in the Covenant of the League of Nations and not in the Locarno Treaty, and since the League Covenant afforded no pretext for the imposition of sanctions in the present case.

ZECH

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<sup>1</sup> Jonkheer A. C. D. de Graeff.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure; see also document No. 4.

## No. 129

9608/E678328-31

*Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 16, 1936.

II Oe 775.

Subject: Austro-Czechoslovak commercial relations.

With reference to our despatches II Oe 391 of February 6<sup>2</sup> and II Oe 575 of February 27.<sup>3</sup>

I. The Czechoslovak Minister President's visit to Vienna<sup>4</sup> was

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest and Sofia. A copy was sent to the Embassy in Rome under cover of a despatch of even number and date (9608/E678332), which reads: "... You should, in whatever manner you may think appropriate, sound the Royal Italian Government to ascertain their attitude to the endeavours being made to bring about *via* Austria closer links between the Little Entente

primarily designed to further the Austro-Czechoslovak negotiations for a commercial treaty which, despite the friendly assurances given by either side on previous occasions, had once again come to a standstill. According to the communiqué, a copy of which is attached,<sup>5</sup> this purpose has again been only partially successful. All the same, a Protocol has been signed in which the principle of granting preferences in the sense of the Stresa Conference<sup>6</sup> resolutions has been agreed upon. According to reports reaching us the concessions granted by Czechoslovakia (that is to say, preferences, general tariff reductions and higher quotas taken all together) are supposed to increase Austria's exports to Czechoslovakia by about eighteen million Schilling a year. According to press reports from Austria the preferences apply to approximately eighty to a hundred items, among them ladies' and gentlemen's outfits, leather goods, leather fancy goods, furs and skins, ironmongery, hardware, rubber goods, paper, art goods and articles made of wood. According to information from Herr Schüller,<sup>7</sup> it is a question of open preferences, which, in accordance with the resolutions of the Stresa Conference, will be communicated to other Powers and will then be put into force within two months. Austria is also intending to grant open preferences to Czechoslovakia for agricultural produce, that is, mainly for oats and barley. Herr Schüller's statements differ in this last respect from the information reaching us from Prague, according to which Austria is to grant Czechoslovakia no preferences but only higher quotas, chiefly for textiles and glassware.

The Chairman of the Czechoslovak Government Committee for German-Czechoslovak Trade Relations, with whom this question was unofficially discussed here on the occasion of other negotiations, stated that they were fully aware in Prague that the preferences could not

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (9608/E678334-35); this communiqué is dated Mar. 10.

<sup>6</sup> Evidently a reference to the conference held at Stresa, Sept. 5-20, 1932, at which representatives of 15 European States adopted a draft convention aimed at improving the economic situation of the South Eastern European countries by means of a system of preferential tariffs based on bilateral treaties and a common fund for raising the price level of grain. See League of Nations, Commission of Enquiry for European Union: *Report by the Stresa Conference for the Economic Restoration of Central and Eastern Europe* (Stresa, 1932).

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Richard Schüller, head of the Commercial Section of the Austrian Foreign Ministry.

and the States of the Rome bloc. You should at the same time explain in detail the German views as given in previous despatches [see footnotes 2 and 3 below] and the present enclosure. It seems to me essential that Signor Mussolini should be fully acquainted with these views when he begins his conversations with the Austrian and Hungarian Ministers on March 19 [see document No. 165, footnote 3]. In any case we must forestall the creation of *faits accomplis* and the Italian Government's being later able to claim that they were ignorant of our views.

"You should report by telegram on the reception of your *démarche* [see document No. 165]."

<sup>2</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 543.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 593.

<sup>4</sup> M. Hodža visited Vienna Mar. 9-10.

be applied without the agreement of other interested States and, above all, that of the German Reich. Austria had undertaken to obtain the agreement of the most-favoured nations. It was, however, also quite clear to them in Prague that conversations would have to be held in advance with Germany and that preferences for those products to which Germany objected could admittedly not be put into effect. On this occasion it was again recalled that the German Government had already informed Prague and Vienna some little while ago that in no circumstances would they retrospectively agree to preferences brought about without their participation.

II. Thus whilst, according to the above information, the question of preferences being granted as between Austria and Czechoslovakia has already advanced quite some way, the more far-reaching plans for preferences in the Danubian region do not appear to have made any progress.

Admittedly at the meeting of the Economic Council of the Little Entente in Prague<sup>8</sup> both Minister President Hodža and the Minister of the Interior [*sic*], Krofta,<sup>9</sup> defined as the next task the need to achieve closer economic integration of the States of the Little Entente among themselves and with the States of the Rome [Protocols] bloc. But the agreements actually reached apparently apply for the moment only to subsidiary economic spheres. A report from the Legation at Prague about the course of this meeting is also being sent to Missions with despatch II Ts. 501 of March 14.<sup>10</sup>

M. Hodža does not, at least for the moment, appear to have further pursued the plan of benefiting Vienna by establishing a Central Grain Office there. Information from British sources suggests that this may be due to Britain, as the principal purchaser in view, having supposedly let it be known that she could assume no obligations in this respect since she must have regard for the Empire's production and since the quality of the South East European wheat did not appeal to the British consumers accustomed to hard-grained wheat.

III. Even although the situation, as above described, does not as yet occasion any particular concern, nevertheless, the Heads of Missions at Prague and Vienna should, making reference to our recent *démarches*, again set forth our views and repeat that we are not prepared retrospectively to accept agreements of this kind.

Furthermore, the Heads of Missions at Budapest, Belgrade and Sofia should inform the Governments concerned that we have again raised objections with the Austrian and Czechoslovak Governments to the preferences which are being proposed according to the Austrian Government's official communiqué of March 10. The Legation at

<sup>8</sup> Held Feb. 24–Mar. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Dr. Kamil Krofta, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister.

<sup>10</sup> This despatch (9608/E678317–26) circulated Prague report C IV/3 of Mar. 5.



Bucharest should also inform the Rumanian Government at a suitable opportunity.

You should report as soon as possible on the reception of these *démarches*.<sup>11</sup>

BÜLOW

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<sup>11</sup> Further information on reactions to the Hodža plan and instructions on language to be held were circulated in despatches II Oe. 860 of Mar. 26 (5753/H040571-79) and W III S.E. 550 of June 6 (8983/E630008-22).

## No. 130

7849/E569605-06

### *Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 16, 1936.

II Ung. 210.

1. The Hungarian Minister who called on me today came in the course of the conversation to speak of the non-aggression pact offered to Czechoslovakia in our proposals.<sup>1</sup> He said that abroad it was naturally deduced from the fact that the non-aggression pacts in the East [of Europe] are to be made on the model of the German-Polish Pact, that these non-aggression pacts are to be made only for a ten-year period; since, by contrast, the new Locarno in the West was to run for twenty-five years, some people were expressing the desire to see the non-aggression pacts in the East [of Europe] likewise extended to cover twenty-five years. The Hungarian Minister said that the Hungarian Government, from their viewpoint in respect of Czechoslovakia, would prefer the non-aggression pacts in the East to remain restricted to ten years. The Minister enquired as to how we viewed this matter.

I replied that in the first place it was a question of getting into conversations with the other side at all. Therefore the shaping of the various non-aggression pacts was for us at the moment *cura posterior*. It seemed to me, in particular, to be premature to go into such details as the duration of non-aggression pacts already at this stage. Nor, understandably, could we bind ourselves in advance at a moment when it was still impossible to foresee how matters would develop.

2. The Hungarian Minister then drew attention to yesterday morning's edition of *Pester Lloyd* (Sunday March 15), remarking that on page 2 the paper contained Hungary's official views on the Schuschnigg visit to Budapest.<sup>2</sup> The Minister mentioned, in this connection, that during their conversations with Schuschnigg the Hungarian Government had been able to note an inclination to improve relations with

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Schuschnigg visited Budapest Mar. 13-16; (reports on the visit are filmed on Serial 5753).



Germany. Schuschnigg had also welcomed the proposal of the Führer and Chancellor that a non-aggression pact should be concluded between Germany and Austria, but had at the same time said the Austrian Government wished to be certain that the National Socialist movement in Austria would not be fostered from Germany.

3. Finally the Hungarian Minister told me that Minister President Göring, who had conveyed the Hungarian desires to Stojadinović (II Ung. 203),<sup>3</sup> had been referred by St[ojadinović] to his latest speech in the Yugoslav Parliament<sup>4</sup> and requested in his turn to use his influence with Hungary. Minister President Göring was expecting St[ojadinović] to do what the Hungarians had done and indicate the points to which the Yugoslavs attached importance. The Minister added that Hungary was in turn quite ready to comply with Yugoslavia's wishes if Yugoslavia for her part would comply with the Hungarian wishes.<sup>5</sup>

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>3</sup> A memorandum by Bülow of Mar. 10; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 576, footnote 3. No further details of Göring's mediation have been found.

<sup>4</sup> In Belgrade despatch 694 Po 3 of Mar. 13 (9371/E663334-36), in which he reported Stojadinović's *exposé* of Yugoslav foreign policy in the Skupština debate on the Foreign Ministry budget on Mar. 6, Heeren pointed out that the assurance that Yugoslavia was also prepared to cooperate with Hungary in the economic consolidation of the Danubian region, represented a new departure.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "H[err] v. Renthe-Fink. It would have been useful to me to have known of this conversation of the morning of Mar. 16 before I received the Hungar[ian] Min[ister] this morning [see document No. 171]. I only got the memorandum this afternoon, however. B[ülow], Mar. 20."

## No. 131

9590/E676275-80

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

584 I A 4

BUCHAREST, March 16, 1936.

Received March 20.

II Balk. 658R.

Subject: Rumania in the Locarno Crisis.

- (1) Her *rapprochement* with Soviet Russia.
- (2) Titulescu's position *vis-à-vis* the King again strengthened.
- (3) Preparations for transports of Russian war material.
- (4) Internal political struggle for and against Russia.
- (5) Anxiety psychosis and Germanophobia.

1. The maintenance of the security of international law on the basis of existing treaties, constitutes the main guiding line of Rumania's foreign policy, in the face of the present "Locarno crisis" as well. Just as Rumania has always been against any kind of revision; just as she

approved and collaborated in sanctions against Italy, so is she now also demanding *vis-à-vis* Germany that the latter country must stand by her promises. This policy is understandable in a State whose sole weapon is that of legality. In this policy, which corresponds with her interests, Rumania proceeds hand in hand with *Soviet Russia*. Just as in the crisis following the German proclamation of conscription [*Wehrmanifest*] and as in the Abyssinian conflict, Russia is once again advocating Rumania's objectives, in fact she appears to be doing this more unswervingly than did France under the "labile Laval [*lavieren-den Laval*]." This constant collaboration with Soviet Russia in Rumanian foreign policy is the most significant effect of the latest events.

A similar effect is produced by the fact that Rumania is now actually experiencing for the first time the practical interplay of the Tripartite Franco-Czech-Soviet Alliance. Like a sabre-rattling ring, the alliance of these three States seems to be cutting Rumania off from Germany, who, isolated and encircled, is becoming more and more remote.

2. In relations between the King and Titulescu, the crisis strengthens the latter's hand. After their visit to Paris together,<sup>1</sup> the King's feelings of independence and self-assurance increased and Titulescu was pushed into the background. Without having obtained a definite promise from Litvinov, having been neglected and inadequately informed by Flandin, he sulkily retired to a diplomatic sick-bed and from thence even tried to offer himself as a mediator in Berlin<sup>2</sup> in order thus to satisfy his need for self-assertion. He now sees that his hour has come once again: with Rumania's interests in harmony with those of Russia—in a common front with France—he can take up "his" policy again, that is to say, at the head of his five-Power group of States, he can help to save world peace by making play with his system of pacts.

But the King, who had hoped to get his country's foreign policy into his own hands and above all to solve the principal problem—that of settling Rumania's relations with Russia—according to his own ideas, now sees himself, under the impact of the Locarno crisis, once again reduced to a mere pawn in the game and compelled by force of circumstances to approve a *rapprochement* with the Soviet State which he might otherwise at least have tried to slow down.

3. Whether or not a pact has already been signed, Rumanian policy in these last few days must have reached a position with Russia from which it would be very difficult to retreat. An invariably well informed confidant even believes that formal conclusion of the Rumanian-Soviet pact is imminent. A military confidant assures us that on March 9 the Crown Council gave favourable treatment to the question of

<sup>1</sup> After King George V's funeral; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 542.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 64 and 581.

Russian pilots flying over the Bukovina. And it has been confirmed from several quarters that the King has now ordered that the preparatory work for the conveyance of Russian war material through Rumania—either by lorry or rail—be speeded up. It is significant in this connection that the short but quite unsuitable stretch through the Bukovina, which is too close to Poland, appears to have been abandoned. Instead the transports are to go by rail from Tighina via Pascani or ex-steamer from Galați to the rail junction of Ajud and thence across the mountains to Abahida (south-east of Cluj), which is being expanded into a depot. From thence they are to be directed, as required, to the Hungarian frontier (Oradea, Valea-lui-Mihai) or over to Czechoslovakia (Halmei).

It is obvious that such “purely technical” preparatory work by the General Staff has more practical significance than theoretical discussions about “a right of military passage” and that later on such rights might not even be required.

At any rate this is what opponents of the Russia policy think. Once again Gheorghe Brătianu has interpellated the Government<sup>3</sup> on the subject of this preparatory work by the General Staff and has demanded that a “non-aggression and a *non*-assistance pact” be concluded with Russia. General Antonescu, the former Chief of the General Staff, who is close to Titulescu, summed up his views to me as follows: Even in the event of Rumania having to enter a war on Russia’s side, she would never permit the passage of Russian *troops* through her territory, but would, on the contrary, regard this as a hostile invasion and would meet it with armed resistance; and, in such a case, she would accept assistance from any State offering it to her. Whether this distinction between the acceptance and/or passage of war *material* and that of *troops* could be maintained in case of war is a moot point. In practice it would suffice if Rumania were already starting to prepare for one of the two eventualities.

4. It is obvious that a crisis such as the present one in a country as unstable and in need of support as Rumania induces extreme nervousness. Meantime, military measures have not gone beyond those ordered in earlier crises of this kind, for instance the alerting of the three divisions stationed on the Hungarian frontier. That a mission of nine French General Staff officers should have been at work here precisely at this time may well be a coincidence;<sup>4</sup> that three officers remained here longer than was originally intended should perhaps be attributed to the crisis.

That the King, making a virtue of necessity, is using the crisis to promote his rearmament programme in every way, is just as under-

<sup>3</sup> For Brătianu’s interpellation in October 1935, see vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 353 and 385.

<sup>4</sup> No further reports on the activities of this mission have been found.



standable as that the Tatarescu Government should again reinforce their position with the King as a "Government of rearmament" and that they should have taken advantage of the general alarm to extend censorship and martial law [*Belagerungszustand*] for another six months "in view of the international tension".

5. On the other hand all these military and political measures in association with alarmist press reports have widely generated a real anxiety psychosis, a condition in which many people do in fact begin "to see ghosts".<sup>5</sup> At the same time the most alarmist reports originate precisely in those circles which are well disposed towards us, in an attempt, by means of such alarmist rumours, to shake up the indifferent masses of the population and to show them into what abysses Titulescu's policy is leading the country.

In responsible quarters here too, no one speaks of war; indeed they even avoid speaking of sanctions. Nevertheless, there has arisen a general disquiet for which we are held responsible. Anti-German feeling is growing and creates an atmosphere which is not propitious for German-Rumanian relations or, indeed, for negotiations between these countries, and which will force us after the crisis has ended to begin work afresh in several spheres.

V. POCHHAMMER

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<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 111.

## No. 132

769/270893

### *The Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, March 16, 1936.

I A 74/3579 b.g.

II M 968 g.

Subject: Transfer of Austrian SA Units.

With reference to your letter II M 713 g. of February 27, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

The Reich has in the meantime restored its full sovereignty over the hitherto demilitarized zone. Whether the objections against transferring SA units to Koblenz, Mainz, Euskirchen near Bonn and Bad

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (769/270859-60). This expressed the Foreign Ministry's objections to a proposal that Austrian SA units should be moved to Mainz and Koblenz where suitable accommodation was available. This proposal had been put to the Foreign Ministry by the Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior in a letter IA 44/3579 b.g. of Feb. 20 (769/270856-57). Submitting this proposal to Neurath, Bülow minuted on Feb. 22 (769/270858): "This proposal is in my view all the more senseless since in the event of re-occupation of the Rhineland, the Austrian SA would be displaced by the R[eichs]wehr and would once again be without a roof over their heads." The proposal bears the following marginal note, dated Feb. 22, by Neurath: "As long as the question of the demilitarized zone is not decided in a positive sense, the transfer is impossible." For previous proposals see vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 398 and 424.



Ems have consequently, already at this stage, disappeared, nevertheless seems to me doubtful in view of the negotiations at present in train. I should therefore be grateful were the Foreign Ministry to inform me, by return if possible, whether the objections to the transfer of Austrian SA units to the Rhineland still hold good or whether they have been dropped—either wholly or in part.<sup>2</sup>

By order:

ERBE

Certified:

MARKO (L. S.)

Secretary

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<sup>2</sup> In a minute of Mar. 25 (769/270894) submitting the document here printed to Neurath, Renthe-Fink expressed the view that the proposed transfer would be likely to provide the French with a pretext for accusing Germany of trying by roundabout means to increase the number of her troops in the formerly demilitarized zone. This minute bears a marginal note by Neurath: "The transfer is inappropriate at the present moment." A letter in this sense, [zu] II M 968 g, was sent to the Reich and Prussian Ministry of the Interior on Apr. 2 (769/270895) by Bülow.

## No. 133

9096/E639815-18

*Counsellor of Embassy Völckers to Ambassador Welczeck*<sup>1</sup>

MADRID, March 16, 1936.

[zu] W 3252.<sup>2</sup>

DEAR AMBASSADOR: In the following letter I venture to inform you about further developments in the Laiglesia business.<sup>3</sup> L[aiglesia] came to see me a few days ago and told me Eltze<sup>4</sup> had sacked him on account of political changes. He had been told that he should apply to Sturm<sup>5</sup> about compensation. L[aiglesia] gave me the letter from Eltze to him, a copy of which is enclosed herewith (Enclosure 1),<sup>6</sup> and his views upon it (Enclosure 2).<sup>7</sup> I refrained from comment and told him that we had nothing to do with the matter and that he should get in touch with Sturm. Since then L[aiglesia] has not been to see me again. I hear that Sturm is also keeping out of the matter.

When he was talking to me L[aiglesia] tried to make the charge that the Embassy had, nevertheless, to some extent sanctioned the agreement

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<sup>1</sup> Welczeck, who in February had been nominated Ambassador in France, was at this time on leave in Berlin. He returned to Madrid on Mar. 29 before moving to Paris where he took over the Embassy on Apr. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 215.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 330, 445 and 450.

<sup>4</sup> Director General of Rheinmetall.

<sup>5</sup> According to enclosure 1 Sturm was the representative of most of the firms concerned in the projected transactions.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (9096/E639819-20).

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (9096/E639821-23).

about his commission made with Eltze, through your letter of January 4 last (Enclosure 3).<sup>8</sup> Information has also reached us here from Berlin that Eltze is supposed to be maintaining there that this agreement about the commission was made through the Embassy who are therefore responsible for it. Therefore, in case you, Sir, wish to take the opportunity of clearing up the matter there, I venture to give you the following account of the history of this agreement:

When Eltze appeared in Madrid towards the end of last December for the second time, he said he must finally clear up the matter of the commission. He studied our documentation and called for Señor Laiglesia's private files which he looked through. One day he came to see me and told me, inveighing very strongly against Lupin,<sup>9</sup> that he had found in L[aiglesia]'s files a correspondence between Lupin and L[aiglesia], hitherto unknown to us, in which Lupin had committed himself to L[aiglesia] to a very high commission which the industry could not afford. He then wrote you the letter of January 3 last, herewith attached as Enclosure 4,<sup>10</sup> in which he said that he had settled L[aiglesia]'s claims to a commission on a fresh basis in terms of the letter which L[aiglesia] was sending us that same day (Enclosure 5)<sup>11</sup> and he asked the Embassy to make an official promise to Señor L[aiglesia] in these terms. The Embassy were cautious enough not to make such a promise in a matter which did not concern them at all, but merely to inform Señor L[aiglesia], by your letter of January 4 last, that it had been noted (Enclosure 3).

I consider it undesirable, and also dangerous for the progress of the current transactions, to show Señor L[aiglesia] the door in such a brusque way. L[aiglesia] has rightly pointed out that on January 3 last, when Eltze concluded the agreement with him, the Spanish Chamber had already been dissolved and that the party in question had left the Government. Apart from this L[aiglesia] also continues to regard himself as an intermediary of Grote,<sup>12</sup> who wrote to him on February 17 saying that he must reduce his commission for the air transactions from 3 per cent to 2 per cent.

I also consider it advisable to contradict talk of the Embassy being supposedly responsible for the Eltze-L[aiglesia] contract about the commission, on the basis of the above account and of the documentation enclosed.

After our experiences in this matter, and on account of previous occurrences (of which you are aware) with Herr Eltze, one might well ask whether Herr Eltze will be of any use at all in future as an

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (9096/E639824).

<sup>9</sup> Freiherr von Lupin, Secretary General of the Export Consortium for War Material of the Reich Federation of Industry.

<sup>10</sup> Not printed (9096/E639825).

<sup>11</sup> Not printed (9096/E639826).

<sup>12</sup> W. A. Grote, representative of the German Aviation Industry.

intermediary with centres abroad. In any case it would appear advisable not merely to state our views to Herr Eltze, but also to inform Herr Trendelenburg.<sup>13</sup>

With cordial greetings, I remain, dear Ambassador,

Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

VÖLCKERS

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<sup>13</sup> Deputy Director of the Reich Chamber of Economics [*Reichswirtschaftskammer*], of which the Reich Federation of Industry was a member, and director of the Export Consortium for War Material.

[EDITORS' NOTE. The Council of the League of Nations held their second, third and fourth meetings in London on March 16, 17 and 18, the meetings on March 16 and 18 being held partly in private, and partly in public, session. (For the record of these meetings see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 315-332.) On March 16, at the second meeting, the French and Belgian delegates submitted a draft resolution finding that the German Government had violated Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles and instructing the Secretary General so to inform the Powers signatories to the Treaty of Locarno.

In a telegram of March 16 (6710/E507275-76) the Secretary General transmitted to the German Foreign Ministry the Council's reply to document No. 123, to the effect that (i) "Germany will participate in the examination by the Council of the questions submitted by the Belgian and French Governments on the same terms as the representatives of the other guaranteed Powers, whose situation under the Treaty is the same as that of Germany—that is with full rights of discussion, the votes of the three Powers not being counted in calculating unanimity", and (ii) "In regard to this second question it is not for the Council to give the German Government the assurance it desires".

Neurath replied to the Secretary General in a telegram of March 17, despatched from Berlin at 5:25 p.m. (6710/E507348), for the text of which see document No. 138, footnote 5.

The terms of this telegram were read out at the commencement of the Council's third meeting (on March 17) at 5:45 p.m. (British time). The reading was followed by an announcement by the President of the Council, S. M. Bruce, that he had seen Ambassador Hoesch and had urged him to request the German Government to expedite the arrival of their representative so that the latter could take part in the Council's deliberations on March 18. He had also, on behalf of the Council, invited Hoesch to take his place at the Council table as an observer or as a representative, and Hoesch was submitting this request to his Government.

At the Council's fourth meeting (public session) on March 18, the President read a letter from the German Ambassador dated March 17, 1936, in which Hoesch replied that he had been in communication with his Government who had come to the conclusion that it would not be possible for the German Delegation to arrive in time for the meeting of the Council on March 18, but that the German representative would be at the Council's disposal on the morning of the 19th. Since the arrival of the official German delegate was imminent, his Government did not consider it advisable to appoint a substitute delegate for one meeting only. No documents on these exchanges between Hoesch and Bruce have been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.]

## No. 134

6710/E507291-92

*Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

II R 554.

Prince Bismarck has just (9:30 a.m.) telephoned the following information:

Last night he had spoken to a diplomatic representative [*Gesandter*] who was friendly to us, and who did not represent one of the Council Powers, but had taken part in the secret session of the Council. In the opinion of this confidant the position is as follows:

The British Government (as Mr. Eden has expressly confirmed to the confidant) have done everything they could to ensure that Point 1 of our reply<sup>1</sup> should be given as conciliatory a reception as possible. Mr. Eden had done so, firstly in order to make it easier for us to come to London and secondly because he had realized that, in view of the great differences between the French and British points of view, a satisfactory reply to Point 2 could not be attained at present. In these circumstances it was not possible for the British Government of their own accord to give us an assurance in the sense of Point 2 either; the Anglo-French divergence of view on this question was at the moment still too great. It was hoped that Germany would appreciate this and would send a representative to London nevertheless. Eden and all the Council representatives who were favourably disposed towards us were confident that if a German representative were present, our proposals would be the subject of negotiations.

When I objected that, in these circumstances, we were running the risk of merely having our ears boxed in the Council and then of being obliged to withdraw without having accomplished anything, Prince Bismarck

<sup>1</sup> The reference is evidently to document No. 123.



admitted that this risk was, indeed, even now not entirely out of the question. On the other hand, it was not at the moment possible to obtain a binding assurance that our proposals would be negotiated upon, but there was every probability that, if a German representative were present, they would be made the subject of negotiations.

The conversation ended with my telling Prince Bismarck that these questions would be studied in detail here this morning.

In conclusion, Prince Bismarck told me that the Locarno Powers were meeting this morning and the Council at three o'clock this afternoon.

DIECKHOFF

### No. 135

3242/712466

#### *Unsigned Note*<sup>1</sup>

[BERLIN, March 17, 1936.]

The German Government expect that the British will do their utmost in the circumstances of the case to bring about at the proper time [*zu gegebener Zeit*] a discussion of our proposals with the interested Powers.

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<sup>1</sup> This note is unsigned and undated; a marginal note in Neurath's handwriting reads: "Proposal given to Phips [*sic*] at midday on Mar. 17." No fuller record of this interview has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives. See also document No. 138.

### No. 136

M284/M011820

#### *The Embassy in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 153 of March 17

PARIS, March 17, 1936.

Received March 17—1:35 p.m.

II M 948 g.

For Reich War Ministry, Army General Staff Attaché Group and Reich Air Ministry Attaché Group.

I regard it as an imperative necessity that measures be taken to render impossible any frontier incidents. This applies especially to the air.

KÜHLENTHAL<sup>1</sup>  
EMBASSY

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<sup>1</sup> Military and Air Attaché in Paris.

## No. 137

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 154 of March 17

PARIS, March 17, 1936[—1:25 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 17—2:45 p.m.

II R 564.

Although public opinion, in spite of being aware that vital French issues are at stake, still remains comparatively calm, there is increased mention of the danger of war. This is by no means the result of any conviction that developments are somehow leading steadily to war; rather there exists at the moment only acute anxiety about the possibility of frontier incidents, especially in the air.

The opinion is repeatedly expressed that every frontier incident must have unpredictable consequences.<sup>2</sup>

FORSTER

<sup>1</sup> Supplied from the Paris draft (6403/E474957).

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in an unidentified handwriting: "Cf. tel. No. 153 from Paris (II M 948 g.) [document No. 136]."

## No. 138

6710/E507346

*Unsigned Memorandum*

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

II R 568.

Herr von Hoesch telephoned State Secretary von Bülow at about 4 o'clock. Mr. Eden, he said, had sent for him and told him that he considered it his duty to bring to the knowledge of the Council the enquiry we had made of the British Government this morning,<sup>1</sup> and that, when the Council met at 4:30 p.m. (3:30 p.m. British time) he would make the following statement, to which he requested the agreement of the German Government, if possible before the beginning of the meeting:

"His Majesty's Government<sup>2</sup> are doing and will continue to do their

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 135.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the paragraph in quotation marks is in English in the original. Another unsigned memorandum of Mar. 17 (3242/712465) is headed in Neurath's handwriting "Reply of the Bri[tish] Government." It opens with the sentence: "Eden told Hoesch the following at 3:45 [p.m.]:" there follows a German translation of the quoted paragraph. The memorandum then continues: "Eden wishes to make this statement known to the Council meeting which starts at 4:30 p.m. Central European Time. Unless he is able to state that a German delegation will come to London, the Council will adopt the decisive resolution today."

utmost to find means of bringing about<sup>3</sup> a peaceful and satisfactory settlement of the present difficulties. It is clear to His Majesty's Government that the proposal of the Chancellor as well as any proposal[s]<sup>4</sup> made by other parties concerned must be discussed at the proper time. The German Government will appreciate however that it is not possible for His Majesty's Government to give any more<sup>3</sup> explicit understanding at this stage."<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> This word has been pencilled in on the original, and also appears in the German translation cited in footnote 2 above.

<sup>4</sup> In the original this letter has been deleted in pencil. The German translation cited in footnote 2 above has "proposals".

<sup>5</sup> At the foot of the document here printed, a draft telegram *en clair* to Avenol conveying the German reply has been written. It reads: "I acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your telegram dated March 16 [see also Editors' Note, p. 178] and have the honour to inform you that Ambassador von Ribbentrop will represent the German Government in the Council of the League of Nations in the examination of the question raised by the Belgian and French Governments. He will be available in London from Thursday morning [Mar. 19] onwards. The Reich Minister for Foreign Affairs, Freiherr von Neurath." This text has been initialled by Neurath.

## No. 139

6710/E507349

### *The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 34 of March 17

VIENNA, March 17, 1936—4:40 p.m.

Received March 17—6:15 p.m.

II R 570.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

The Polish Minister,<sup>1</sup> who has just returned from Warsaw, told me that the denunciation of the Locarno Treaty has met with complete approval there and that our bold decision indeed evoked admiration, as Warsaw had been informed of the intention of the French General Staff to march. There was, he said, nervousness over our intentions about a non-aggression pact with Czechia<sup>2</sup> in view of the latter's far-reaching military agreements with Russia.<sup>3</sup> It has become known from a secret report that the Czech Council of Ministers decided on March 13 that the German defiance ought not to be recognized either *de jure* or *de facto*. Berlin must be compelled to undertake the re-establishment of the demilitarized zone without being subjected to too great a humilia-

<sup>1</sup> Jan Gawrónski.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the Czechoslovak-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance, signed in Prague on May 16, 1935, ratifications exchanged in Moscow on June 9, 1935, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLIX, pp. 347-361. See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 105.

tion. The Austrian delegate to the League of Nations,<sup>4</sup> who has excellent contacts in London, thinks that our position continues to be very favourable. The Foreign Minister<sup>5</sup> says that the Budapest visit is going according to plan and without new points of view.<sup>6</sup> Schuschnigg's excursion [*Extratour*] to Prague now seems in vain.

PAPEN

<sup>4</sup> E. Pfügl.

<sup>5</sup> Egon Freiherr von Berger-Waldenegg.

<sup>6</sup> Berger-Waldenegg and Schuschnigg had visited Budapest, Mar. 13-16. The Legation in Budapest reported on this visit in telegram No. 19 of Mar. 16 (8644/E605353) and despatch A 59 P 31 of Mar. 17 (6114/E454601-04).

## No. 140

6710/E507357

### *The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 10 of March 17

SANTIAGO, March 17, 1936—5:30 p.m.

Received March 18—1:40 a.m.

II R 573.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs<sup>1</sup> told me again today that Chile was trying to reach a settlement [*Ausgleich*] in London and that, to this end, it was above all necessary to gain time. Edwards<sup>2</sup> had accordingly been told that, if necessary, he was to press for the dispute to be referred to The Hague. The Minister did, admittedly, incline . . . (group mutilated) that our alleged treaty violation was graver than that which, as I had constantly emphasized, France had committed through her alliance with the Soviets, but he thought that a verdict by the Hague Court would be superseded by the start of the negotiations suggested by us. For this reason Cruchaga counsels acceptance of the invitation to London since, in spite of the French refusal, negotiations will inevitably be started there. The Minister did not, it is true, expressly promise that Chile would dissociate herself from sanctions, but he hinted that Chile would hardly separate herself from other Latin American States and that Ecuador was definitely against sanctions.

General impression: Chile would, if necessary, vote with the majority in favour of finding that a treaty violation exists, but will endeavour to evade this necessity.

SCHOEN

<sup>1</sup> Miguel Cruchaga Tocornal.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 121, footnote 2.



## No. 141

6025/H047443

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the Soviet Union*

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

zu IV Ru. 1208.<sup>1</sup>

The enclosure<sup>1</sup> is forwarded for your information.

In the circumstances it does not appear advisable to address the Soviet Government on the subject of M. Maisky's *démarche*. It has, however, been shown once again—and this can later be made use of as opportunity occurs—that the Soviet Government is pursuing an official campaign of incitement against us. The grave view taken by us of the Soviet menace has thereby been once more confirmed as correct.<sup>2</sup>

By order:

DIECKHOFF<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6025/H047440); IV Ru 1208 was despatch A 1054 of Mar. 11 from London, reporting that an editorial in *The Times* of that date had stated that the Russian Ambassador in London, Maisky, had the previous day called on the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Lord Cranborne, at the House of Commons and given him an account of the Soviet Government's views to the effect that they were strongly opposed to any negotiations or exploratory conversations with the German Government precisely when the German Government had broken a voluntarily agreed Treaty and that the Soviet Government held it to be incumbent on the League Council to take most resolute action. In a minute of Mar. 12 (6025/H047442) Counsellor Hencke expressed the view that a formal protest in Moscow promised little success, and that in this case it might be more effective to take no notice; he further recommended instructing the Moscow Embassy and German Missions to the Locarno Powers in the sense of the document here printed and of the instructions cited in footnote 2 below.

<sup>2</sup> Copies of the document here printed were sent to the main Missions under even date (6025/H047444-45) with instructions to propound the views stated therein in conversations and to stress that this Russian step furnished further convincing proof of the Soviet Government's policy of aggravating European differences as much as possible.

<sup>3</sup> The copy of the document here used is the working copy, which is heavily revised by hand; the fair copy bearing Dieckhoff's signature has been filmed as 6025/H047446.

## No. 142

6695/H104617-18

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

[II R 589].<sup>1</sup>

The Rumanian Minister called on me today in order, on instructions from Titulescu, to deny the reports, appearing in the foreign press, that Titulescu had adopted an unfriendly attitude towards

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E507408-09) which, like the document here printed, is marked: "cf. IV Ru. 1226", under which number the Paris Embassy's despatch A 1199 of Mar. 13 (6695/H104613) was registered. This despatch transmitted copies of the report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate on the Franco-Russian Pact (see document No. 392, footnote 7) and of the *Journal Officiel de la République Française: Débats Parlementaires*, 1936, No. 28 of Mar. 13, which contained (pp. 252-269) the record of the Senate's session of Mar. 12 at which the Senate approved the Pact.

Germany during the negotiations in London and, in particular, had raised objections to an invitation being sent to Germany. M. Comnen even claimed that it was thanks to Titulescu that the compromise formula (Locarno Power) had been found, which alone had made the invitation to Germany on the basis of equality possible at all. He emphasized that, in his own best interests, Titulescu was compelled to advocate a solution satisfactory to both France and Germany, though, indeed, he could not deny that, in the Council, Titulescu would criticize and condemn the method of unilateral action which we had adopted. I told him that now, in the coming negotiations in London, Titulescu would by his attitude surely have the best opportunity of affording us tangible proof of whether or not he really desired good relations with Germany.

M. Comnen showed a lively interest in our proposals. He enquired whether we already had any ideas as to how negotiations on them should be conducted and whether, should the occasion arise, we would agree to our proposals being dealt with collectively or at least simultaneously by League of Nations Committees. I explained to M. Comnen—and this was something of which he was obviously not aware—that, in our reply<sup>2</sup> to the Council's invitation, we had not required that our proposals be made the subject of discussion in the Council, but had only wanted an assurance from the Locarno Powers that our proposals should forthwith be examined by the interested Powers. The question of the method of negotiation, therefore, still remained open; the Führer and Chancellor had, however, made certain suggestions in the well-known interview with Ward Price.<sup>3</sup>

When, at the end of our conversation, I drew M. Comnen's attention to the report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Senate (Le Trocquer)<sup>4</sup> on the Franco-Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance and the passage in it referring to Russia's right of military passage through Rumania, M. Comnen declared that, a few days ago, in reply to a question in the Chamber by George Brătianu, the Rumanian Government had expressly denied that a pact of mutual support between Rumania and Soviet Russia was *at present* in preparation.<sup>5</sup>

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 123.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> Senator Yves Le Trocquer, *rapporteur* of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the French Senate on the Franco-Russian Pact.

<sup>5</sup> The relevant extract from the Foreign Affairs Committee's report (see footnote 1 above) was transmitted to the Missions in Moscow and Bucharest on Mar. 18 (6695/H104614-16), with the comment that it had been discussed with Comnen, who had attempted to dispel Germany's misgivings.

## No. 143

8463/E595848-51

*Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

II Bel. 396.

## THE QUESTION OF THE FRANCO-BELGIAN MILITARY PACT

## I.

France and Belgium concluded a military alliance (*accord militaire*) on September 7, 1920, which was signed by Marshal Foch and the Chiefs of the Belgian and French General Staffs. The text of this military convention has not been published.

By an exchange of Notes of September 10 and 15, 1920,<sup>2</sup> which was published and registered with the League of Nations, both Governments confirmed this military convention. In the exchange of Notes it is stated that the purpose of the convention is to reinforce the guarantees of peace and security resulting from the Covenant of the League of Nations. It is further stated that the sovereignty of the two Governments remains undiminished in respect of [the imposition of] military burdens [*Militärlasten*] upon their countries and in respect of determining in individual cases the question of whether the conditions envisaged by the convention have been met.

Moreover, there has never been any doubt that this military alliance [*Militärbündnis*] was directed solely against Germany and that it contained military agreements in case of a German attack or a violation of the provisions governing the demilitarized zone.

## II.

Then on March 6, 1936, there took place in Brussels an exchange of Notes between the Belgian and French Governments concerning certain amendments to the military obligations of the two countries.<sup>3</sup>

The new agreements contained the following:

1.) Both Governments declare that their mutual *political* engagements are restricted to the obligations arising from the Locarno Treaty and the Covenant of the League of Nations.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "This memorandum was drawn up for Ambassador v. Ribbentrop to take to London with him (sections I-III by Herr Woermann). 1) To Herr Hertz for his information. 2) File with II Be[lgien] R[intelen], Mar. 18."

<sup>2</sup> For the text of this exchange of Notes see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. II, pp. 127-130.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the French Note of Mar. 6, 1936, see *Annales Parlementaires, Chambre des Représentants*, 11 mars 1936, pp. 789-790. M. van Zeeland stated (see footnote 4 below) that the Belgian Note was couched in similar terms.

2.) Both Governments place on record that the military convention of 1920, which was still based on the occupation of the Rhineland by France and Belgium, contains provisions which are now obsolete, and that all that remains of the contents of the convention is the agreement concerning military consultation between the two General Staffs. The purpose of this consultation is described as being to carry out the obligations arising out of the Locarno Rhine Pact and to study the technical requirements for the fulfilment of those obligations. It is further stated that this consultation cannot result in any political obligations or in any obligations in respect of the organization of national defence.

### III.

The Belgian Minister President stated in the Chamber on March 11,<sup>4</sup> amongst other things, that he had been surprised when he had, at that time, become acquainted with the text of the military convention of 1920. The convention applied to a situation which no longer existed. He also summed up the scope of the new agreements as follows:

1.) The consultation between the General Staffs remains a condition for the effective fulfilment of the obligations arising from international treaties. It constitutes a major element in Belgian security which must be carefully maintained.

2.) It was a matter of freeing the agreements from the deadweight of obsolete clauses, which did more harm than good.

3.) It was a matter of removing the aura of secrecy which surrounded the convention. There would thus be eliminated all sources of confusion and ambiguity, even for those directly concerned.

### IV.

In conversations about the significance of the new agreements we for our part must emphasize that the new arrangements now agreed upon by France and Belgium have actually made no difference at all to the hitherto existing state of affairs which, in our view, was at variance with the character of the Rhine Pact of Locarno, which last was based on equality. Even though the secret convention of 1920 has lapsed, permanent consultation still continues between the two General Staffs, as is laid down afresh in an exchange of Notes, and this may grow into the closest type of permanent cooperation. In this way Belgium will become, if not legally then none the less *de facto*, dependent upon France to so great an extent that the freedom of political decision which Belgium has formally still preserved for herself will not in fact exist in the event of serious complications in Europe. Belgium's weight, compared with

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 99.



that of France, is too slight to prevent the consultation between the two General Staffs from leading to the complete dependence of the Belgian Army Command on that of France. In this way, however, Belgium will of necessity also become politically a satellite of France. If, on the other hand, Belgium attaches importance to being regarded as a fully independent party to a new European treaty system, then she will have to consider breaking away from this consultation between the General Staffs. Such a decision could perhaps be made easier for the Belgian Government if, in the proposed new Rhine Pact, where Belgium is concerned, the obligation to afford assistance were to be restricted to the other parties to the Pact and, without detriment to her freedom of action in other political spheres, a similar obligation were not imposed on Belgium herself.

## No. 144

2067/449261-65

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 266

LONDON, March 17, 1936.

The Ambassador is informed.

II M 952 g.

Subject: Naval Conference.

Mr. Craigie asked me to come and see him at 4:30 p.m. this afternoon, and told me that the Naval Conference would continue to negotiate, in spite of the major developments in political affairs for which the League of Nations is now meeting in London.<sup>1</sup>

I. Mr. Craigie handed me the draft<sup>2</sup> of the Naval Treaty, as it had now been drawn up by the Commissions and to which probably only very minor alterations would have to be made. In addition, he gave me two new versions<sup>3</sup> for Articles 22 and 23, as contained in the draft text, which substantially represent the first two parts of the "escape clause" which I have already submitted with my Mar. No. 248 of March 4.<sup>4</sup>

That is to say,

Article 22. "Escape clause" in the event of a transgression of the rules by a Power not party to the Treaty.

Article 23. In the event of war.

<sup>1</sup> Footnote in the original: "I learn from a special source that the British Cabinet decided on the afternoon of March 16 to carry on the Naval Conference negotiations to the end and to continue to negotiate on these matters with Germany too in the same way as before."

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7790/E562356-77).

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7790/E562378-80).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 46, footnote 3. The words "escape clause" are in English in the original.

These two Articles, in the form submitted, have been as good as accepted. Article 24 has been left open and has not yet been submitted even in draft form. It contains the third part of the "escape clause", which states that in the case of altered "circumstances",<sup>5</sup> a far reaching release from the Treaty is envisaged.

Mr. Craigie said that the very great difficulties experienced in the drafting of these particular three Articles, and especially of Article 24, had so far prevented a final version from being achieved. He emphasized, however, that it was indeed this very Article 24 which provided wide opportunities for release from the obligations of the Treaty.

He also gave me the British Government's draft, together with an alternative draft<sup>6</sup> drawn up by the French Government, incorporating the regulations for the conduct of submarine warfare contained in Part IV of the London Treaty.

Mr. Craigie said he would be grateful for as speedy an expression as possible of our views with regard to the draft *in toto*.

II. With regard to the German statement which was conveyed to us by telephone at 9 a.m. on March 7,<sup>7</sup> he stated:

1.) The British Government agree to the duration of the Treaty being set at six years (as stated in Article 25 of the draft treaty).

2.) The British Government agree to the agreement being cast in the form of an exchange of notes, as was done in the case of the Anglo-German agreement of June 18, 1935.

3.) As regards the reservation made by us, that the agreement should come into force only after Russia had concluded a similar agreement, he said that the British Government urgently requested us to withdraw this reservation, and in support of this request he made the following points:

a) This reservation would, in certain circumstances, leave the date of the coming into force of the Three-Power Treaty as well completely in Russia's hands, and Russia would then be in a position, by non-cooperation or similar means, to hold up the whole treaty structure.

b) In drawing up the treaty most strenuous—and successful—efforts had been made to exclude any kind of reservations by one nation. If we now made reservations of the sort suggested, one could assume that other nations would also make such reservations and that the treaty structure would never come into being at all.

c) With the duration of the Treaty fixed at six years, it was very unlikely that Germany could be placed in any difficulties by Russian naval construction. Within the period available, this was not a practical possibility, particularly as we were now in a position, thanks to

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (7790/E562381-85).

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 10.

the 35 per cent agreement, swiftly to build a large, modern and efficient fleet.

d) The "escape clause"<sup>5</sup> (Art. 22, 23, 24) with its wide possibilities was entirely at our disposal.

e) It was also proposed that, in the event of any occurrence affecting national security before the coming into force of the new treaty, the British and ourselves should mutually inform each other, by means of an exchange of notes, and agree in what form an alteration could be made in order to meet any difficulties which might arise.

f) For their part, the British would continue with every means to seek to induce the Russians, too, to conclude a treaty as soon as possible. In view of the exceptionally slow way in which the Russians had so far reacted to every proposal, however, the chances of this were more remote. So far the same data had been given to the Russians as to us. By all accounts, however, it could be assumed that they, too, would conclude a similar treaty; if we for our part had got so far, this might be apt to exercise a certain amount of influence.

Mr. Craigie therefore once more urgently requested that, for the reasons given above, the German Government should withdraw their reservation of making the coming into force of the treaty dependent upon Russian signature.

III. Mr. Craigie also told me that the treaty would probably be signed at the beginning of next week, that is, by Britain, France and the U.S.A. separately between themselves, as the Americans had to return home as quickly as possible, in order to be able to submit the treaty to their Congress, which starts its next session on May 1. Otherwise the Congress cannot be seized of it until next January.

IV. As regards the exceptions made by us in our memorandum of February 26, 1936,<sup>8</sup> he suggested a procedure whereby these exceptions could be dealt with in a separate memorandum which referred to the naval agreement of June 18, 1935 and was couched in a form which the British Government would be prepared to suggest to us.

WASSNER

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<sup>8</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 584.

## No. 145

6710/E507389-91

*Major General Keitel to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 17, 1936.

II R 583.

MY DEAR MINISTERIALDIREKTOR: On instructions from the Reich War Minister I am enclosing herewith:

(1) An account of a conversation between Colonel Hotblack, the British Military Attaché here, and the competent officer of the Army General Staff.

In this connection it should be noted that:

(a) It is not a motorized *reconnaissance* unit [*Abteilung*] which moved into the Rhineland Zone, but a motorized *anti-tank* unit.

(b) The strength of the Landespolizei<sup>1</sup> incorporated into the Army is known to you.

(c) Colonel Hotblack will be informed that these matters, as being political questions, will in future be dealt with by our Delegation.

(2) Two copies of a table<sup>2</sup> compiled here giving proportionate strengths and forces stationed in the Rhineland zone and a zone of French territory of equivalent size.

With the expression of my highest esteem,

Heil Hitler!

KEITEL

[Enclosure]

Att. Gr.

March 16, 1936.

MEMORANDUM ON A CONVERSATION WITH COLONEL HOTBLACK,  
THE BRITISH MILITARY ATTACHÉ, ON MARCH 16

Colonel Hotblack does not understand the criticism, expressed in the German press, of the French Military Attaché<sup>3</sup> on account of the latter's calculation of the strength of the German troops who have

<sup>1</sup> For the Landespolizei see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 56, with footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (6710/E507392-93). One of these tables showed the Rhineland zone as an area of 56,417 sq. km., with a population of approximately 16,000,000, and the forces stationed there as totalling 36,500, of which approximately 22,500 (including airmen) had been moved in and 14,000 were Landespolizei, already in the Rhineland zone. The other table adduced figures to show that in a French frontier area chosen for comparison the strength was 200,000 men, together with heavy artillery, armoured vehicles, airmen and an impregnable ring of fortifications.

<sup>3</sup> Brigadier General G. Renondeau.



entered the Rhine zone. He is of the opinion that, in calculating the total strength, taking 19 battalions and 13 units [*Abteilungen*] as a basis and adding to them the special formations attached (Staffs, 13th and 14th Companies, communications units, etc.), the resultant figure must be even higher than 30,000.

In this connection Colonel Hotblack enquired about the strength of the Landespolizei units which had been incorporated into the Army.

I referred him to the information regarding the strength of the German forces in the Rhine zone which had been given to Foreign Secretary Eden by Ambassador von Hoesch, and which had also been published in the British press this morning.<sup>4</sup>

Colonel Hotblack apparently takes a more serious view of the situation today, presumably mainly under the impression of a letter from Colonel Paget, the Head of the Foreign Armies Section of the British General Staff.

Britain [he said] will have to pay a heavy price for having put her signature to the Locarno Treaty—and, indeed, probably in the form which is least acceptable to the British, namely, by entering into new and precise commitments on the Continent. Just like Germany, Britain has her national honour, and that national honour demands, under certain circumstances, that Britain should yield to France's urgent demand for additional guarantees of her security.

The Colonel emphasized in this connection that these commitments, should they materialize, would be of a purely defensive nature. He expressed the fear that this might not be clearly understood in Germany and that it was possible that in consequence our attitude towards the German-British Naval Agreement might change.

Colonel Hotblack then asked whether the matter of the Russian Air Force's activities in Czechoslovakia had now entered a more critical stage. One heard the Germans speak of it so much nowadays. When I countered by asking who it was who was speaking of this, I only got a vague reply. I said that I myself knew no more about the matter than what appeared in the press.

Finally the Colonel asked once again for data on the strength of the Landespolizei in the Rhine zone. He said further that he would be grateful to learn whether a motorized reconnaissance unit had also moved in. The German press had twice mentioned armoured vehicles. He himself thought that both questions were unimportant, but he was often suddenly asked about such things by his Ambassador.

On the whole I had the impression that Colonel Hotblack now views the situation in a graver light than previously and that he is no longer so confident that a solution will be found. Colonel Paget's letter seems to have made a great impression on him.

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 112 and footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 146

6710/E507844-45

*Ambassador Attolico to State Secretary Bülow*<sup>1</sup>

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, March 17, 1936/XIV.

II R 567.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: The new formula, about which I spoke to you yesterday,<sup>2</sup> will, it seems, be the one you will find enclosed herewith.

In the present situation and in view of the fact that circumstances are changing from one moment to the next, I cannot guarantee that this will be the final one . . .<sup>3</sup>

I am not calling on you myself in order not to disturb you.

Cordially yours,

B. ATTOLICO

[Enclosure]

## TRANSLATION

Italy does not contest the "reality" [*matérialité*] of the facts determining the violation of the Treaty by Germany. She does not, however, consider, as least as far as she herself is concerned, that this declaration can represent a basis for ulterior measures, with which, in view of the situation which has arisen within the League of Nations and on the part of the sanctionist States, she does not propose to associate herself. She therefore declares herewith that she will not take part in such ulterior measures as may arise from the present vote.

<sup>1</sup> This document and its enclosure are in French in the original.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 16 (4602/E190326) Bülow recorded that Attolico had called on him that day to discuss the implications of the Franco-Belgian proposals to the League Council.

<sup>3</sup> These points appear in the original.

## No. 147

7609/E544945

*Minute*<sup>1</sup>

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

March 18, 1936—12:45 p.m.

For Herr Paul Scheffer.<sup>2</sup>

The King is taking an extraordinarily active part in the whole affair; he has caused a number of important people in the Government to come and see him and has said to them: "This is a nice way to start my reign."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Evidently a record of a telephone conversation.

<sup>2</sup> Foreign Editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

<sup>3</sup> Quoted in English in the original.

The King won't hear of there being a danger of war. He is absolutely convinced that what must now be done is to get over the "breach of law" as quickly as possible and get on to the practical discussion of the Führer and Chancellor's proposals. In view of the tremendous influence possessed by the King and his immense energy, due importance must be attached to this where Germany is concerned.<sup>4</sup>

DR. V. STUTTERHEIM<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "To be submitted to the St[ate] S[ecretary] and Foreign M[inister], Aschmann, Mar. 18." (ii) [initialled] B[ülow], Mar. 18." (iii) "Has been submitted to the Foreign M[inister], Ko[tze], [Mar. 19.]" (iv) [In Aschmann's handwriting, subsequently scored through] "To write: Dear H[err] Scheffer: Interesting though yesterday's information from Stutterheim concerning the King was, the Foreign Minister requests me to draw your attention to the "untrustworthiness" of the telephone/telegraph. The Embassy would have been available!" (v) "Done verbally; to be filed, A[schmann]."

<sup>5</sup> London Correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

## No. 148

6710/E507394

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 26 of March 18

PRAGUE, March 18, 1936—3:10 p.m.

Received March 18—4:50 p.m.

II R 584.

Foreign Minister Krofta yesterday addressed a joint session of the Foreign Affairs Committees of the Chamber and the Senate about the restoration of German sovereignty over the Rhine zone and the German Memorandum.<sup>1</sup> The text follows by today's post.<sup>2</sup> The Foreign Minister was, of course, at pains to present Germany's action as being unjustified, and supported the French thesis that, as long as the question of breach of treaties remained unresolved, positive proposals by Germany could not be discussed. The Locarno Treaty, he said, was still in force, and therefore also the German-Czechoslovak Treaty of Arbitration,<sup>3</sup> which was held, as Germany too had indicated, still to be in force. Czechoslovakia did not wish to take any initiative in this dispute between the Western Powers and Germany, but neither did she wish to shirk the duties and sacrifices entailed by membership of the League of Nations and by her treaties of alliance.

For the rest, Czechoslovakia could conclude only such bilateral treaties as, by their terms, came within the framework of collective

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> With despatch A III 1 of Mar. 18 (6710/E507411-57), which enclosed the speech in German and in French translation. A summary of Krofta's speech is contained in *The Times* of Mar. 18, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 26, footnote 4.

security. Maintenance of the treaties Czechoslovakia had already concluded was a precondition for any future settlement. In conclusion he expressed readiness to do everything, in conjunction with allies and friends, to contribute towards a peaceful solution to the dispute and towards securing a lasting peace for the future.

The previous policy will therefore be continued but a loophole will be left open for a *détente* with Germany. The tone of the [Minister's] speech was objective and nowhere aggressive, and today's press can, in the circumstances here, also be described as calm again.

EISENLOHR

## No. 149

6710/E507402

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 35 of March 18

ROME, March 18, 1936—8:10 p.m.

Received March 18—10:55 p.m.

II R 587.

Italian concern over Anglo-German cooperation is becoming increasingly apparent. It is believed that the British are disposed, once the German case has been settled, forthwith to bring up the Abyssinian question against Italy again, and it is feared that Britain's further objective is an Anglo-Franco-German understanding. The Berlin correspondent of *Tribuna* today considers that the article in the *DAZ*,<sup>1</sup> which speaks of a tripartite understanding between Germany, Britain and France, should be construed as meaning that Germany, too, is striving for such a regrouping in Europe. According to reliable information, the French, taking advantage of this anxiety, have begun to endeavour to win Italy over to their side in return for support in the Abyssinian question.

I would recommend that in discussing the current situation the German press should make no mention of the idea of a tripartite understanding without Italy or of the possibility that Germany might follow Britain's lead against Italy, but should stress the tendency towards a general understanding in Western and Central Europe.

VON HASSELL

<sup>1</sup> The Berlin newspaper, *Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*.



## No. 150

6710/E507359-60

*The State Secretary to the Legation in Chile*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 18, 1936—9:15 p.m.

No. 12

II R 573<sup>1</sup> Angabe I.

With reference to your telegram No. 10.<sup>1</sup>

In so far as it aims at a settlement and refuses to regard Germany's guilt as a foregone conclusion, we welcome the attitude adopted by the Chilean Government. But their suggestion that the matter be referred to the Hague Court and the steps already taken in this direction by their representative on the Council in London are wholly mistaken. The problem, apart from its formal legal aspect, is quite predominantly of a political nature. The Franco-Soviet alliance has caused a complete reversal in the whole European constellation and has destroyed, not only the letter, but the whole political meaning of Locarno. In conjunction with the Czechoslovak-Russian Treaty of Alliance, it has decisively changed Germany's politico-military position to our disadvantage, so that we have been compelled to bring about a certain readjustment, at least by restoring within our own territory the possibilities of defence which had hitherto been restricted. So grave a political problem cannot be dealt with by a Court of Justice.

You should emphatically bring these views to the attention of the Chilean Government.

There can be no question of League of Nations sanctions, as Article 16 does not apply. See our telegram No. 9 of March 8.<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the London negotiations is, over and above this, to find a solution which will prevent coercive measures by the Locarno Powers, and, instead, build up a new European peace settlement.<sup>3</sup>

BÜLOW<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 140.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 25, which was telegram No. 9 to Santiago.

<sup>3</sup> The concluding paragraph has been added in Bülow's handwriting.

<sup>4</sup> In a telegram of Mar. 18 (6710/E507361) Bülow informed the Missions in Buenos Aires, Rio de Janeiro, Montevideo, Caracas and Quito of the Chilean Government's attitude as reported in document No. 140, transmitted the second paragraph of the document here printed and instructed them to hold language accordingly.

## No. 151

9172/E645344-46

*Senior Counsellor Roediger to Ambassador Moltke*

BERLIN, March 18, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON MOLTKE: With reference to my letter of March 13,<sup>1</sup> I venture today to give you the following brief information about the Corridor question:

The upshot of the conversation between Herren Göring and Schacht was that Göring drew the Führer's attention to the question, with the result that a conversation between the Führer and Herr Schacht was proposed. In view of the major political events and the preparations for the elections,<sup>2</sup> this conversation between the Führer and Herr Schacht has, as I was able to ascertain today, not yet taken place. I have caused it to be pointed out to Herr Schacht that we have hitherto attempted with success to postpone for the time being further measures of strangulation by the Poles. This will not be possible for long, however, and the matter is therefore urgent.

A few days ago at a reception I spoke to Lipski about the question. Lipski showed much concern at our not having stated that we were prepared to pay debts accruing in the future from the Corridor traffic, in full, in cash. I told him that in my view he and the Polish Government were indulging in illusions if they expected some millions of Zloty to be transferred monthly in cash in future. This the foreign exchange situation would by no means permit. I could quite imagine that, for the future too, it would be possible to reach agreements about supplementary deliveries of goods to cover current debts. Recently we were informed of the plan to build a hydro-electric power station on the Dunajec.

I was at pains further to make it plain to M. Lipski that in our view it was not feasible to proceed as the Poles had in mind, by first fixing a sum which could presumably be transferred for the Corridor payments, and then regulating traffic through Poland accordingly. In order to reach better traffic arrangements it was essential, I said, to negotiate with Poland about reducing the charges for the Polish railways' services. The Poles are persistently shirking this question, apparently because they do not wish to give up the large profits they are making on the basis of the Paris Treaty.<sup>3</sup> Our railway experts have calculated that, reckoning only the traction costs, we should have

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 107, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 9.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Convention concerning Freedom of Transit between East Prussia and the rest of Germany, signed at Paris, Apr. 21, 1921, by Germany, Poland and Danzig; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. XII, pp. 61-175.

to pay some 10–15 million Złoty per annum for normal transit traffic, which naturally includes a small margin of profit for Poland.

You will see from this letter that we continue to concern ourselves with the matter. Moreover, I recently asked M. Lipski to intervene with his Government in order to have further restrictive measures postponed. He told me that he was doing so.

With cordial greetings and

Heil Hitler!

I remain,

Yours etc.,

ROEDIGER

## No. 152

6710/E507400

### *The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 53 of March 18

LONDON, March 19, 1936—1:42 a.m.

Received March 19—4:15 a.m.

II R 586.

No. 1 from the Delegation of March 18.

Shortly after my arrival in London this evening I had a half-hour's conversation with Eden. It was interesting that in his statements he did indeed admit, although only in a brief remark in passing, that the withdrawal of German troops from the Rhineland was out of the question, but he did on the other hand stress very emphatically—as he had done earlier today in his speech<sup>1</sup>—that all participants, including, therefore, Germany, must make a real contribution towards the solution of the crisis.

I left Eden in no doubt that Germany had already done what she could towards the easing of the present tension by having declared that she would not increase the strength of her troops during the negotiations and that she would move no more troops towards the Belgian and French frontiers,<sup>2</sup> but that she was not able to contribute anything beyond this. Germany's real contribution to peace lay in the Führer's great proposals of March 7,<sup>3</sup> to whose significance I drew Eden's attention. The conversation was friendly in tone. But Eden on the whole listened without comment.

A full report on the conversation follows.<sup>4</sup>

VON RIBBENTROP

<sup>1</sup> For the text of Eden's speech at the League Council meeting on Mar. 18, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 326–327.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 84.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31, and document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Not found.

## No. 153

8607/E603832-33

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 157 of March 18

PARIS, "March 19, 1936—[8:45 a.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 19—11:10 a.m.

II R 606.

In Paris and, as I gather from information sent to me about statements made by foreign politicians, abroad too, the question of the repercussions of the domestic situation here on the foreign policy of the Sarraut-Flandin Cabinet is being much discussed. Some think that the Government's dependence on the Left, whose leanings towards Soviet Russia are well known, will impel them to adopt a particularly hostile attitude towards National Socialist Germany, whereas a more conciliatory attitude might be expected from a Government more inclined to the Right and influenced by hostility to Bolshevism. Others think, on the contrary, that the Left Wing, as a result of the "No more war" slogan, would exercise a paralysing influence on the Government if the situation were to become more acute. They detect signs of this in the Left's criticism of the rigid way the French point of view was formulated in Sarraut's broadcast,<sup>2</sup> and also of Flandin's threat in London to mobilize, but they overlook the fact that both these things met with disapproval from the Right as well.

Internal political disagreements will certainly continue for the time being, if only in view of the election campaign now beginning, and such disagreements also find expression in assessments of the Sarraut Cabinet's attitude in foreign policy. In my opinion, however, it would be wrong to attribute to them any decisive influence on developments in foreign policy. As repeatedly reported from this post, French public opinion is at heart united in its conviction that the struggle against the creation of *faits accomplis* is a vital matter for France. The Sarraut Government, like any other which might replace them, can and must take account of this fact. This lessens the importance of criticism of the present Government's attitude, criticism which stems from considerations of domestic policy.

FORSTER

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<sup>1</sup> Supplied from the Paris draft (6403/E474974).

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.



## No. 154

3242/712474-76

*Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

BERLIN, March 19, 1936.

[II R 637].<sup>1</sup>

Herr Dieckhoff telephoned me early this morning from London to give me the following information:

(1) Herr von Ribbentrop has had a conversation with Mr. Eden yesterday evening, on which he has sent a separate telegram.<sup>2</sup>

(2) The next meeting of the Council is to take place at 10 o'clock (11 o'clock German time) this morning, and will presumably open with Herr von Ribbentrop's speech.

(3) The text of this speech has been amended in accordance with the instructions from Berlin.<sup>3</sup>

(4) Our opponents plan to adopt the resolution finding that Germany has committed a breach of the demilitarization provisions immediately after Herr von Ribbentrop's speech and without any further discussion. But the Delegation has already been in touch with the President of the Council with a view to assuring that there will at least be an adjournment of the Council session after Herr von Ribbentrop's speech, in order to give the members of the Council an opportunity of reflecting upon the arguments advanced by Herr von Ribbentrop.

(5) The resolution, the proposed text of which Herr Dieckhoff read out to me, is couched in purely formal terms. It contains no arguments of any sort, and merely states that, by her action of March 7, Germany has committed a breach of the provisions of Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles and that consequently the Council requests the Secretary General to notify the Powers signatories of Locarno of this finding, in accordance with the Rhine Pact.

Herr Dieckhoff asked me to consider what attitude Herr von Ribbentrop should adopt towards such a resolution. He said he would telephone me again at the Ministry at 10 o'clock.

After discussing the matter with the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary, I informed Herr Dieckhoff shortly after 10 o'clock as follows:

(1) We considered a protest against the resolution to be necessary;

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E507683-85).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 152.

<sup>3</sup> No record of these instructions has been found. For the text of Ribbentrop's speech as delivered to the League of Nations Council on Mar. 19, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 334-338. An unsigned, undated memorandum (63/43860-80) headed in Neurath's handwriting "Draft of Ribbentrop's speech" differs in certain respects from the speech as delivered.

it should if possible be made immediately after the draft [resolution] had been read out and should be in the following terms:

"My attitude towards the resolution proposed by the President is self-evident from the declaration I have just made.

"The scope and the effect (*la portée et l'effet*) of the provisions of Articles 42 and 43 of the Treaty of Versailles cited in the draft resolution formed the subject of the Rhine Pact and were precisely defined therein. I have just set forth once again the reasons for the German Government's view that, in consequence of the conduct of the French Government, the Rhine Pact must be regarded as terminated. A treaty which has become invalid owing to the conduct of one of the parties to it can no longer be violated by the other parties. This, therefore, also applies to the provisions contained in Articles 42 and 43 of the Versailles Treaty. My Government cannot, therefore, regard as justified a resolution by the Council finding that Germany has committed a breach of these provisions and must formally protest against it. In the same way, they would also be compelled to enter a protest against any consequences which might derive from such a resolution."

(2) Furthermore, we also considered it necessary to enter an objection to the Council's procedure should it actually come about that the resolution finding Germany at fault [*Verfehlung*] were adopted, without any interval at all, after Herr von Ribbentrop's speech. The form which the objection should take must naturally depend on whether the Council were to regard the whole of its proceedings on the subject as being finally concluded with the finding of an offence, or whether it might be that, following yesterday's suggestion by Mr. Eden and M. Munch, it were to proceed to further deliberations, on the basis of Article 11 of the Covenant, concerning the situation arising from the finding of Germany being at fault.

GAUS

## No. 155

6022/H044479

### *The Ambassador in China to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 51 of March 19

NANKING, March 19, 1936—1:20 p.m.

Received March 19—8:45 a.m.

IV Chi. 481.

In our conversation today Marshal Chiang Kai-shek again referred to rumours of a German-Japanese understanding,<sup>1</sup> which I again denied. He finally told me that he did not believe these rumours. He requested me to continue, as I had hitherto done, to promote friendly

<sup>1</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 504 and 552.

relations between China and Germany. He expressed his admiration for the occupation of the Rhineland and wished every success to the Führer and Chancellor's further actions, but requested that this utterance should not be made public.

TRAUTMANN

No. 156

8229/E585404-05

*The Ambassador in China to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 52 of March 19

NANKING, March 19, 1936—8:22 p.m.

Received March 19—5:25 p.m.

IV Chi. 487.

When I paid him a farewell call today before going on leave, I informed Marshal Chiang Kai-shek of the contents of your telegram No. 13,<sup>1</sup> concerning Klein. The Marshal said that Klein had been recommended to him by Herr von Seeckt and for that reason he had trusted him. But Klein had deceived him and therefore he no longer trusted him. Klein had said that the arsenal in Canton was quite a small affair and on this assumption he had consented to it. He had never given his consent to the gas installation. The Governor of Canton had now reported that the arsenal was being built on quite a considerable scale. So Klein had not kept his promise. Political conditions in . . . (one group missing) were not stable and, if they were to change, he could accept no responsibility for the continued existence of the arsenal. On the basis of the negotiations with Klein 300 tons of wolfram had now been got ready to be shipped to Germany (cf. telegram No. 32 of November 13, 1935<sup>2</sup> from the Reich War Minister). If Klein's activities in Canton could be stopped, the wolfram would be delivered; otherwise this would not be possible. I told the Marshal that the impression prevailed in Berlin that Klein enjoyed his complete confidence. After all, he had given him a letter to take to the Führer and Chancellor<sup>3</sup> and had conferred a decoration upon him. The Marshal, rather painfully affected, replied that it was true that he had given Klein a letter but that he knew nothing about the decoration. I then asked the Marshal about the mission which he had sent to Germany,<sup>4</sup> on the basis of the Klein negotiations, to

<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 552, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 552, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 517 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> A list of the names of the five members of the mission led by Chen Ku, Director of the Keiluan Mines, was enclosed with a communication, W Stb Abt W Wi 2241/36 III b of Mar. 13 (5564/E397576-77), from the War Minister in which it was stated that the Chinese Embassy were making arrangements for the mission to call on the Foreign Minister.

conclude barter transactions. Chiang Kai-shek replied that he was not interested in the mission's negotiations if Klein's Canton enterprise were not broken off. The Marshal apologized for speaking to me so frankly about Klein, without flowery diplomatic language, but said that if he did not do so the misunderstandings might perhaps permanently remain.<sup>5</sup>

TRAUTMANN

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 54 of Mar. 19 (6680/H096383-84) Trautmann reported information from Chiang Kai-shek's Secretary of State, Wong Wen-hao, that a fortnight ago Chiang had received a telegram direct from Blomberg stating that no deliveries would be effected to other provincial Governments without the Central Government's approval. Chiang had now learned that the German concern, Hapro, were making deliveries to Canton. The telegram also gave details obtained from Wong of the wolfram position and of various activities by Klein, and requested instructions on informing Falkenhausen. In telegram No. 33 of Mar. 21 (6680/H096387), Erdmannsdorff replied that the matter was under consideration and that Blomberg desired that Falkenhausen should not be informed for the time being.

[EDITORS' NOTE. The Council of the League of Nations held its fifth meeting, at first in private and then in public session, on the morning of March 19. It held its sixth meeting, at first in private and then in public session, that afternoon. At the morning (fifth) meeting Ribbentrop made a speech setting out the German case. At the afternoon (sixth) meeting the draft resolution was put and voted upon by the Council, thirteen votes being cast in favour and one (Germany) against. The Chilean representative abstained and the representative of Ecuador was absent. For the record of these meetings see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 333-341.]

## No. 157

3242/712477

### *Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 19, 1936.  
e.o. II R 603.

At two o'clock Herr von Hoesch gave the following information:

Voting on the draft resolution did not take place this morning. Instead, after Herr von Ribbentrop's speech,<sup>1</sup> the Council adjourned until 3 o'clock this afternoon. Voting will then take place, unless one or other of the members of Council wishes to speak. Behind the scenes the French are urging that the individual members of the Council should refrain from speaking again. They are said also to have advised Litvinov, who originally wished to speak again, against doing so.

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note above.



What will happen after the vote is still completely uncertain. There are at present no indications that the Council will take up the positive side of Herr von Ribbentrop's speech and express a *vœu* [wish] that the matter be taken up in negotiations. Herr von Ribbentrop, who, incidentally, is suffering from a touch of influenza, is himself not yet clear as to whether he ought to urge behind the scenes that a Council Power should put forward a proposal to this effect. Herr Dieckhoff, who was lunching with the President of the Council,<sup>2</sup> the Swedish Minister<sup>3</sup> and M. Munch, was going to try to ascertain during lunch what possibilities there were.

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>2</sup> S. M. Bruce (Australia).

<sup>3</sup> Erik Kule, Friherre Palmstierna.

## No. 158

6710/E507495

### *The Minister in Chile to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 13 of March 19

SANTIAGO, March 19, 1936—6:44 p.m.

Received March 20—1:10 a.m.

II R 612.

With reference to your telegram No. 12.<sup>1</sup>

The Minister for Foreign Affairs<sup>2</sup> who, on March 8, had spontaneously expressed views about the Hague Court of Arbitration which accorded with our own,<sup>3</sup> told me, when I acted upon your instructions under reference, that the object of the Chilean proposal, which had been rendered out of date by today's vote, had been simply to gain time. The Minister showed disappointment at Argentina's breakaway from the South American front.<sup>4</sup> He said Argentina had put strong pressure on Chile to vote with the majority.<sup>5</sup>

SCHOEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 150.

<sup>2</sup> Miguel Cruchaga Tocornal.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 34.

<sup>4</sup> Presumably a reference to the Argentine representative's having voted in favour of the draft resolution in the League Council on Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 203.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 16 of Mar. 21 (6710/E507496) Bülow instructed Schoen to express Germany's thanks for Chile's attitude in London, for all this had not done complete justice to the German point of view. The document here printed was repeated to Buenos Aires as telegram No. 36 of Mar. 21 (also 6710/E507496) with instructions from Bülow to express to the Argentinian Government Germany's surprise at Argentina's representative on the Council, in contrast to his two South American colleagues, supporting a resolution directed against Germany.

## No. 159

6710/E507527

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Ecuador to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 11 of March 19

QUITO, March 19, 1936—9:00 p.m.

Received March 20—6:00 a.m.

II R 618.

With reference to my telegram No. 5 of [March] 9.<sup>1</sup>

At today's interview the Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> confirmed that the Government here had instructed their representative on the Council<sup>3</sup> to stay away from the London meeting of the Council.<sup>4</sup> In explanation of this he repeated his basic views as expressed on March 9,<sup>1</sup> but added a still clearer reference to the good relations, and particularly the good commercial relations, existing between Ecuador and Germany, which had recently been yet further strengthened by the conclusion of a trade agreement.<sup>5</sup>

DRECHSLER<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E506485); in this Drechsler reported that, when acting on his instructions (in document No. 25) with the Ecuador Foreign Minister, the latter had stated that his Government's representative on the League Council would be instructed not to concern himself with the actual dispute but rather to work towards a compromise and the maintenance of peace.

<sup>2</sup> General Angel Isaac Chiriboga.

<sup>3</sup> Gonzalo Zaldumbide, Ecuador Minister in Paris.

<sup>4</sup> The Ecuador representative attended the Council's session on Mar. 14 but not its subsequent London meetings. His absence was stated to be due to illness.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to the Exchange of Notes regulating trade relations between Ecuador and Germany of Dec. 12, 14 and 17, 1935. Copies of the German Notes of Dec. 12 and 14 were forwarded to Berlin in Quito report B 400 of Dec. 19, 1935 (M206/M006593-97); the Ecuador Note of Dec. 17 has not been found.

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 16 of Mar. 21 (6710/E507528) Bülow sent instructions to Quito to express Germany's gratitude for the Ecuador Government's instructions to their representative on the League Council not to take part in the resolution against Germany.

## No. 160

769/270898

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy and to the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe<sup>1</sup>*

SECRET

BERLIN, March 19, 1936.

W.A. No. 550/36 g.L.

II M 974 g Rs.

There are signs that in the present situation a frontier incident for which Germany was responsible would be very welcome to the French.

<sup>1</sup> This document was sent to the Reich Finance Ministry, the Reich Ministry of the Interior, the Chief of Staff of the SA, the Reichsführer-SS (including Gestapo), the Korpsführer NSKK, the Reich Labour Leader and the Reich Chief Forester, with the re-

I therefore request that energetic measures be adopted to avoid such frontier incidents, which could also arise through alerts [*Alarmierungen*].

I must likewise reserve to myself the decision as to whether and when the frontier control requires reinforcing at some point or other by the despatch of police, etc.

BLOMBERG

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quest that corresponding measures be ordered; copies for information went to the Reich Chancellery, the Führer's Deputy, the Abwehr and Foreign Department of the Reich War Ministry; the Foreign Ministry, from whose files the document here printed is taken, does not appear in the distribution list, but evidently received a copy from the last-named department.

### No. 161

7208/E529886-89

*Ambassador Hassell to Foreign Minister Neurath*

ROME, March 19, 1936.

DEAR NEURATH: I should like to add a few explanatory comments to my telegram No. 35<sup>1</sup> of yesterday regarding the [political] barometer here.

The reception accorded to the German action by Italian public opinion, that is, so to speak, amongst a public which includes, above all, the Armed Forces, was at first one hundred per cent friendly, especially under the aspect of its being a diversionary offensive. This attitude has persisted until now, but on the other hand, there is gradually beginning to spread, like a patch of oil, the view which has predominated from the start in *political* circles, including Mussolini himself, namely, of horrified surprise at our readiness to return to the League of Nations. Apart from the feeling that they have thus been deprived of the only weapon against intensified sanctions, two other considerations are also coming to the fore: In the first place they feel this sudden offer to be incompatible with the statements only recently made to Italian personalities, which had led to the conviction that Germany was not considering a return to the League of Nations. Attolico did actually ask me, a few weeks ago, whether Italy, were she to threaten withdrawal, would not have to fear that there might then be a return by Germany. I reported this to the Führer at the time, whereupon he told me that he had no idea of returning [to the League]. In the second place there is an idea that Germany is systematically drawing closer to Britain. Since they are convinced here that Britain intends to persist in her intransigent attitude towards Italy, and must thus go on being regarded as an undoubted foe, the prospect that Britain's position might be strengthened by a *rapprochement* with Germany is viewed with concern; it is also feared that, within the framework of a

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 149.

newly founded Anglo-German friendship—in the League of Nations too—Germany will not weigh in on Italy's behalf. The result is that there is a markedly increased tendency here to look to Paris, whilst on the other hand France, aware of this situation, is trying to win over Italy to her side again.

From such premises there may result developments which will certainly be neither in our interests (particularly not in the Danubian Basin) nor correspond to what the Führer said about the basic principles of German policy, particularly in Central Europe, during the last three conversations which we had together with him, namely in the middle of January and on February 16 [*sic*] in Berlin.<sup>2</sup> Thus, in my view, we must without delay counteract any false conceptions of the aim of our policy; firstly by making quite plain to the Italians that it is our intention, even within the framework of good Anglo-German relations, not only not to pursue a policy hostile to Italy, but, on the contrary, to throw in our weight against sanctions; and secondly, we ought again to make it clear that the aim of our policy is peaceful cooperation in Western and Central Europe, *and that we fully value and expressly include Italy as a factor in this cooperation.* This would be particularly suitable just at present, when the Rome Three-Power discussions<sup>3</sup> are beginning. Nor can we be indifferent to Italy's attitude in the further Locarno conversations and everything connected therewith. On February 16 [*sic*]<sup>2</sup> in setting forth to us the security offers which he intended making in order to preclude any suspicion of aggressive intentions in the occupation of the Rhineland, the Führer expressly told us that, in this connection, we would have to return to the basic concepts of the Four-Power Pact.<sup>4</sup> Hereupon I myself pointed out that it would be expedient not (as originally formulated) to stress the Four-Power Pact itself, but its *basic concepts*, because developments had not stood still and new forms were called for (particularly with regard to Poland). In line with what the Führer had said, I myself cautiously formulated a sort of political reasoning in the lecture I recently gave here on "Cavour and Bismarck" (on which I reported in No. 1383 of March 13)<sup>5</sup> in the following terms: "It is the very times in which we live which bring home to us this idea (namely of European cooperation), since the dynamic events on the Red Sea and on the Rhine have destroyed a situation founded on treaties which ended a war but created no true peace. May the brilliant ideas which inspired the Duce when he proposed the Four-Power Pact arise in a

<sup>2</sup> For the conversation of Jan. 17 see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 506, for the two conversations of Feb. 19 see *ibid.*, document No. 575; Hassell was in Rome on Feb. 16.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 165 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> The Four-Power Pact between Italy, Germany, France and Great Britain, initialled in Rome on June 7, 1933; for the text see vol. i of this Series, document No. 292.

<sup>5</sup> Not found.



new form, in order to enable these events to become the beginning of a settlement of all disputes which are dividing Europe."

I have been able to ascertain that these words of mine have had a very reassuring effect here, but real results can naturally only be achieved if Berlin (and especially the press there) stresses the lines of thought which I have sketched out above.

All the foregoing, of course, is as viewed from the vantage-point of "Rome", and without my being fully conversant with the present state of affairs in London. Should a united Franco-British front against Germany nevertheless be formed again, this would of course modify the views I have put forward. But in any case it remains important not to lose sight of Rome entirely.

(Closing salutation by hand).<sup>6</sup>

HASELL

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<sup>6</sup> Thus on the draft here printed.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On March 19, the representatives of the Locarno Powers, other than Germany, held a further meeting in London and drew up the text of proposals, which were communicated to the League Council under cover of a letter to the Secretary General from the British Foreign Secretary dated March 20 (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 348-351, also British White Paper (Cmd. 5134 of 1936). These proposals were before the Council at its seventh (private) meeting held on March 20, at 5 p.m. (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 341-346), when the Council adjourned its discussion until Monday, March 24.

A copy of these proposals sent to the German delegation from the British Foreign Office, with a covering note which reads: "With Mr. Eden's compliments", (7962/E574885-96), and is marked: "March 20, 0.45 [a.m.], D[ieckhoff]." This document reads:

"The representatives of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and of Italy, having met to examine the situation created by the communication addressed to their respective Governments by the German Government on March 7th, 1936,

I.

Take note of the draft resolution submitted to the Council of the League of Nations in the name of Belgium and France, by which the fact of the breach by Germany of Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles has been established with a view to giving notice thereof to the Powers Signatories of the Treaty of Locarno,

They further take note of the support given to this draft resolution by the Governments of the United Kingdom and Italy.

## II.

Whereas:

(1) Scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations is a fundamental principle of international life and an essential condition of the maintenance of peace;

(2) It is an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty nor modify the stipulations thereof except with the consent of the other Contracting Parties;

(3) The breach of Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles and the unilateral action taken by the German Government in violation of the Treaty of Locarno without recourse to the procedure laid down by the Treaty of Locarno for the settlement of disputes conflict with these principles;

Consider that;

(1) By this unilateral action the German Government confers upon itself no legal rights;

(2) This unilateral action by introducing a new disturbing element into the international situation must necessarily appear to be a threat to European security.

## III.

Declare that nothing that has happened before or since the said breach of the Treaty of Locarno can be considered as having freed the Signatories of that Treaty from any of their obligations or guarantees and that the latter subsist in their entirety,

Undertake forthwith to instruct their General Staffs to enter into contact with a view to arranging the technical conditions in which the obligations which are binding upon them should be carried out in case of unprovoked aggression.

## IV.

Decide to invite the German Government to lay before the Permanent Court of International Justice at The Hague the argument which it claims to draw from the incompatibility between the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance and the Treaty of Locarno, and to undertake to accept as final the decision of the said Court, without prejudice to the operation of paragraph 7 (2) below.

The French Government declares that it has already agreed that the said Court should be seized of the question stated above.

## V.

Decide in the name of their Governments jointly to invite the German Government to subscribe to the following provisional arrangements which shall remain valid until the conclusion of the negotiations referred to in paragraph 7 below.

(1) All despatch of troops or war material into the zone defined by Article 42 of the Treaty of Versailles will be immediately suspended; in consequence the forces stationed there will not exceed . . . battalions and . . . batteries of artillery (insert here the official figures given by the German Government);

(2) The paramilitary forces (S.A., S.S., Labour Corps and other organisations) stationed in the said zone will be strictly maintained as they were before March 7th, 1936; in particular they shall in no case be formed into large units or serve directly or indirectly for the reinforcement of troops;

(3) No works of fortification or preparation of groundworks shall be proceeded with in the said zone. No landing ground will be laid out, equipped or improved there.

The Governments of France and of Belgium undertake similarly to suspend during the period any despatch of troops into the zones adjoining the frontiers between their countrie [*sic*] and Germany.

## VI.

Decide to take, for the same period, all the necessary measures with a view to:

(1) Create an international force, including detachments from the armies of the guarantor Powers, to be stationed, with the agreement of all the Governments concerned, in a zone contained between the Belgian-German and Franco-German frontiers on one side, and on the other a line situated to the East of the said frontiers and following them at a distance of approximately twenty kilometres, this zone being entirely reserved for occupation by the said international force;

(2) Set up an international commission whose duty it shall be to supervise the carrying out of the obligations undertaken by the Powers which have formed the above-mentioned force, as well as by Belgium, France and Germany for the eventual execution of Paragraphs V and VI (1) above.

## VII.

Taking note of the proposals made by Germany in the memorandum communicated to them on March 7th.

Decide, so far as they are concerned

to propose to the German Government, if that Government explicitly accepts the invitations addressed to it in pursuance of the preceding paragraphs, that it should take part in negotiations which would be based in particular on the following elements;

- (1) Examination of the proposals Nos. 2 to 5 made by Germany in the memorandum of March 7th;
- (2) Revision of the status of the Rhineland;
- (3) Drawing up of mutual assistance pacts open to all the signatories of the Treaty of Locarno and intended to reinforce their security.

So far as concerns the Four Powers represented in London the reinforcement of their security provided for will include in particular obligations of mutual assistance between Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and Italy, or any of them, with suitable provisions to ensure prompt action by the signatories in case of need as well as technical arrangements for the preparation of such measures as would ensure the effective execution of the obligations undertaken.

Further, the four Powers declare that they have agreed to press in the course of the negotiations for the adoption of provisions intended to prohibit or to limit the subsequent establishment of fortifications in a zone to be determined.

### VIII.

Considering that the maintenance of peace and the organisation of collective security can only be assured by the respect for treaties and the limitation of armaments; that the re-establishment of economic relations between the nations on a healthy basis is equally necessary to the process of reconstruction,

Declare themselves ready:—

To support the introduction at the Council of the League of Nations of resolutions proposing to invite all the nations concerned to an international conference which would in particular examine:—

1) Agreements organising on a precise and effective basis the system of collective security and paying attention to the definition of the conditions in which Article XVI of the Covenant of the League of Nations should be applied;

2) Agreements tending to assure the effective limitation of armaments;

3) International arrangements having as their object the extension of economic relations and the organisation of commerce between the nations;

4) The proposals 6 and 7 made by the German Government in their memorandum of March 7th, as well as the suggestions made subsequently in regard to Austria and Czechoslovakia.

### IX.

Recalling that, under Article 7 of the Treaty of Locarno, the obligations devolving upon their respective Governments do not restrict the duty of the League of Nations to take whatever action may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of the world,

Referring to the resolution of the Council of the League of Nations of the 17th April, 1935, regarding the course to be adopted by the members of the League of Nations in the event of the unilateral repudiation of undertakings concerning the security of peoples and the maintenance of peace in Europe.



Decide:—

(1) to notify the Council of the League of Nations, under Article II of the Covenant, of the unilateral action taken by Germany, action which appears a danger for European security and a threat to peace,

(2) consequently to propose the annexed resolutions to the Council of the League of Nations, it being understood that the German Government would be entitled to present its observations on the subject.

*Draft Resolution to be Presented to the Council of the League of Nations.*

#### I. The Council:

Recalling that it has itself on several occasions recognised, as has also the Assembly, the importance of the Treaties of Locarno from the point of view of the maintenance of peace and security.

Considering that:

(1) scrupulous respect for all treaty obligations is a fundamental principle of international life and an essential condition of the maintenance of peace;

(2) it is an essential principle of the law of nations that no Power can liberate itself from the engagements of a Treaty nor modify the stipulations thereof unless with the consent of the other contracting parties;

(3) the breach of Article 43 of the Treaty of Versailles and the unilateral action taken by the German Government in violation of the Treaty of Locarno without recourse to the procedure laid down by the Treaty of Locarno for the settlement of disputes, conflicts with these principles;

Considers that:

(1) by this unilateral action the German Government confers upon itself no legal rights;

(2) this unilateral action, by introducing a new disturbing element into the international situation, must necessarily appear to be a threat to European security.

Entrusts a committee composed of . . . with the task of making proposals to it with regard to the practical measures to be recommended to the members of the League of Nations.

#### II. Considering:—

that the German Government has claimed that the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance is incompatible with the Treaty of Locarno and that in consequence of this incompatibility that Government was justified, not only in denouncing the said Treaty but also in introducing its troops into the demilitarized zone,

that there thus arises a juridical question which might be usefully

taken before the Permanent Court of International Justice if the interested Powers were to declare themselves ready to comply with the decision of the Court, as the French Government for its part has already agreed to do,

the Council:—

invites the German Government to notify the Permanent Court of International Justice of the question thus defined and in the conditions indicated above and to request it to give its decision as soon as possible, it being understood that the parties will at once comply with the ruling of the Court

### III. Considering:—

that the unilateral action of Germany has necessarily appeared to be a threat to European peace and that in consequence it ought, without prejudice to the application of Articles I and IV of the Locarno Treaty, to bring about on the part of the members of the League of Nations, by application of, and in accordance with the terms of Article 11 of the Covenant, the adoption of any action that may be deemed wise and effectual to safeguard the peace of nations;

The Council takes note:—

1) of the declaration drawn up in the name of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and Italy, as regards the maintenance in force for those Powers of the rights and obligations resulting from the Treaty of Locarno;

2) of the communications made to it by the Governments of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom and Italy on the subject of the measures contemplated in respect of the situation created by the violation of the zone defined in Article 42 of the Treaty of Versailles.

Letter to be addressed by the Representatives of the United Kingdom and Italy to the Representatives of Belgium and France.

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At the moment when the representatives of Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy have just decided, as provided in today's arrangement, the common line of conduct of their respective Governments, I am authorised to give you the official assurance that, if the effort of conciliation attempted in the said arrangement should fail, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom [in the text as published the words: '/the Italian Government' are added here]:—

1. (a) Will at once consider, in consultation with your Government and the French/Belgian Government, the steps to be taken to meet the new situation thus created;

(b) Will immediately come to the assistance of your Government, in accordance with the Treaty of Locarno, in respect of any measures which shall be jointly decided upon;

(c) Will, in return for reciprocal assurances from your Government take, in consultation with your Government, all practical measures available to His Majesty's Government for the purpose of ensuring the security of your country against unprovoked aggression;

(d) Will, for this purpose, establish or continue the contact between the General Staffs of our two countries contemplated in paragraph III (2) of the said arrangement;

2. And furthermore, will subsequently endeavour at the Council of the League of Nations to secure the formulation by the latter of all useful recommendations for the maintenance of peace and the respect for international law." ]

## No. 162

6710/E507502-03

### *The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

EXTREMELY URGENT  
Delegation No. 2  
of March 19

LONDON, March 20, 1936—4:45 a.m.  
Received March 20—6:50 a.m.  
II R 614.

Eden and Halifax asked Dieckhoff and myself to call this evening and spoke to us about the draft of a plan by the Locarno Powers, the text of which I will telephone through as soon as it reaches me.<sup>1</sup>

I told the Ministers that I could only express an opinion when I had the whole plan in writing before me and asked for a copy. Mr. Eden stated that he could only send me a copy tonight after a meeting which was to be held by the British Cabinet.

Whilst various passages from the plan were being read to us from a document, certain points were at once apparent which would be quite unacceptable to us, such as, for example, setting up unilaterally on the German side a 20 km. wide zone which was to be occupied by neutral troops during the period of the negotiations, and a further point, namely, that no fortifications should be built in the Rhineland zone during the period of the negotiations, and yet another point, namely, that the question of the compatibility of the Franco-Russian Pact with the Locarno Treaty should be submitted to the Hague Court of Arbitration. I told Eden and Halifax at once that these points were unacceptable to Germany, as there could no longer be any question whatever of restrictions, even if only temporary, on Germany's sovereign rights. Further, I repeated my request that these matters be sent me in writing and stated

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208; a copy in the Foreign Ministry files (3242/712586-92) is headed "Telephoned from London at 2 a.m., Mar. 20, 1936."

that I would only then be in a position to express an opinion on them. Eden then said that, when I became acquainted with the plan, he would be glad if I would tell him which points were acceptable and were not.

Eden was at pains to make plain to us how difficult it had been to persuade the French, who, as we were aware, had originally put much more far-reaching demands, to agree to a kind of temporary compromise solution, and he made an urgent appeal for the German Government, too, to make some form of contribution towards a *détente*. I completely reserved my attitude until after I had become acquainted with the plan.

As soon as I have received the plan tonight, I will study it and decide further.

RIBBENTROP

## No. 163

63/43924-25

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

Midday, March 20, [1936].

The Führer has decided on the following course of action:

Herr von Ribbentrop will attend today's meeting of the Council and will first wait and see what questions are raised for discussion and possibly as subjects of a resolution. If the document of the Locarno Powers<sup>2</sup> already lies before the Council and is discussed, or if it is referred to in any way during the debate, Herr von Ribbentrop should ask in what rôle the German representative was to take part in the future meetings of the Council and particularly whether, both during the discussion and when a resolution was taken, he would be on a footing of complete equality with *all* Council Powers. In this connection attention should be drawn to paragraph IX (2) of the document of the Locarno Powers, where, in contrast to sub-paragraph (1) which invokes Article 11, there is merely a reference to [Germany] being entitled to present [her] observations. Care should also be taken to ensure that we are not—as happened in yesterday's proceedings with the findings now made—cheated of our right to vote because France and Belgium are also excluded from voting. The moment there is any indication of the Council intending to exclude us from voting rights or, what amounts to the same thing, not counting our vote, the question

<sup>1</sup> A marginal note in an unidentified handwriting on a copy in the files of the German delegation in London (6432/E480478-79) reads: "London, Mar. 20, 1936. Received from Berlin by telephone, 1:00 p.m."

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.



should be asked: on the basis of what provisions is the Council thus proceeding and, in particular, on the basis of what provisions is it deemed possible to take resolutions in the course of proceedings based on Article 11 without the concurrence of all participating Powers?

Should the Council finally adopt the view that the German representative should not vote or that his vote is not to be counted, it should be formally stated that this has created an entirely new and unexpected situation for the German Delegation, that the Delegation therefore feels compelled first to obtain fresh instructions from its Government, and that it must, meanwhile, refrain from taking part in the Council's negotiations. On these grounds, the adjournment of the meeting should be moved. If this be rejected, Herr von Ribbentrop and his entourage should withdraw from the meeting.

In view of the whole position, it appears essential that the question of our right to vote should not be clarified privately in some way or other before the meeting, but that the relevant question should be formally put at the meeting itself.

Should the Council adopt the attitude that it would be better to leave over the question of the right to vote for the time being and to proceed with the material discussions, it must be insisted that the question be clarified immediately.

## No. 164

6710/E507826

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 36 of March 20

ROME, March 20, 1936—4:50 p.m.

Received March 20—7:45 p.m.

II R 659.

During a conversation on other matters, Suvich told me today that he had as yet no clear picture of the position in London. I remarked upon the Italian vote in the Council of the League of Nations<sup>1</sup> whereupon he replied that, as he had previously told me,<sup>2</sup> the finding of a *de facto* breach of treaty had been inevitable. It would have been technically impossible to separate Versailles and Locarno. Indeed, the Führer himself had not denied that a *de facto* breach of the Versailles Peace Treaty had occurred, and Grandi in his speech<sup>3</sup> had expressly spoken only of Versailles. In everything that had happened, however, Italy was maintaining her attitude of reserve, which meant that Italy was unable

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 203.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 113.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of Grandi's speech on Mar. 18, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 327-328.

to take part in any action. I remarked that, in that case, Italy would also be unable to associate herself with a resolution of the Locarno Powers concerning an appeal to the Hague. Suvich replied that an appeal to the Hague Court of Arbitration could only be resolved upon were Germany simultaneously to be called upon to declare herself in agreement; if Germany refused, there could be no question of a Hague verdict, but the League Council would itself have to resolve upon what it would do in this situation. In that event Italy's reserve would again take effect.<sup>4</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>4</sup> The text of this document was repeated on Mar. 21 to Paris as telegram No. 149 and to Brussels as telegram No. 46 (6710/E507827).

## No. 165

5753/H040566-67

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 37 of March 20

ROME, March 20, 1936—6:45 p.m.

Received March 20—8:25 p.m.

II Oe. 850.

With reference to your dispatch II Oe. 775 of March 16.<sup>1</sup>

This afternoon I had a conversation with Suvich about the politico-economic aspirations in the Danube Basin and I elaborated the German standpoint in detail in accordance with my instructions. Suvich's reply was as follows: In the Italian view, he said, a distinction should be drawn between general politico-economic plans in the Danube Basin on the one hand and economic negotiations between two States on the other. As regards the former, Italy was not inclined, in the present situation, to join any form of new combination. In view of sanctions, there could be no question of closer politico-economic contacts between Italy and the Little Entente countries, and likewise none of extending the Rome Protocols<sup>2</sup> to include these countries. For the time being Italy wished to remain alone with her two Rome partners. For this reason the impending Rome conversations<sup>3</sup> would serve solely to reinforce anew the close relations existing between the three countries.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 129, with footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> For the texts of the three Protocols signed by Austria, Hungary and Italy in Rome on Mar. 17, 1934, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLIV, pp. 281-303. See also vol. II of this Series, document No. 332.

<sup>3</sup> Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg and Minister President Gömbös, accompanied by their Foreign Ministers, arrived in Rome on Mar. 20 for a meeting with Mussolini, at the end of which a communiqué was published on Mar. 23; on the same day three Additional Protocols between Austria, Hungary and Italy respecting Collaboration in Danubian Matters were signed; for the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 140, p. 333.

To this a certain sentimental impulse had been added by the fact that Hungary and Austria, although members of the League of Nations, had not participated in sanctions. I referred to my conversation with Mussolini<sup>4</sup> in which we discussed the change in the political situation as regards the relations with Germany compared with the timely [*sic*]<sup>5</sup> conclusion of the Rome Protocols and expressed the hope that the change would be reflected in the character of the Rome meeting. Suvich replied that he was completely in agreement and that they would certainly take this into account at the meeting.

As regards bilateral negotiations, Italy, he said, had felt some mis-giving concerning those being held between Vienna and Prague, simply because of the political colour which Prague had tried to give to them. Apart from this, Italy had no objection to economic agreements between the other signatories of the Rome Protocols and individual countries of the Little Entente. This also applied to Austro-Czech negotiations. Indeed, Italy could only welcome any economic relief which Austria or Hungary might obtain from such negotiations, for the economic support of Austria and Hungary had been the object of the Rome Protocols. In the meanwhile, he said, the Italian Government had no precise information regarding the contents of the Czech-Austrian agreements and particularly regarding the character and extent of the preferences granted. On this point, therefore, Italy has not yet expressed any views.

Suvich, who immediately afterwards went to see Mussolini, promised that he would inform the latter of the German point of view.

For economic details please refer to yesterday's report No. 1516.<sup>6</sup>

HASELL

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<sup>4</sup> Evidently a reference to the conversation of Feb. 22, see document No. 5 and vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 579 and 603.

<sup>5</sup> The word "timely [*zeitlich*]" has been queried in decyphering. The draft (M298/M012718-20) in the files of the Embassy in Rome, at this point, reads: "... the change of the political situation compared with that prevailing at the time [*Zeit*] of the conclusion of the Rome Protocols ..."

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (9608/E678340-41).

## No. 166

6710/E507828

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 31 of March 20

STOCKHOLM, March 20, 1936—7:25 p.m.

Received March 20—8:35 p.m.

II R 660.

With reference to today's press reports that the Locarno Powers are proposing the temporary establishment of a neutral frontier zone in the Rhineland, to be occupied on the German side of the frontier by Scandinavian troops, I learn from a senior and authoritative Swedish military source that, in any case, Sweden would have the gravest misgivings about accepting any task of that nature. Government circles here may be presumed to hold the same view.

MEYNEN

## No. 167

6710/E507782

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 14 of March 20.

BRUSSELS, March 20, 1936—10:30 p.m.

Received March 21—1:30 a.m.

II R 642.

The Belgian Cabinet at noon today approved the London agreement of the Locarno Powers.<sup>1</sup> At the afternoon session of the Chamber, van Zeeland made a lengthy statement<sup>2</sup> explaining in detail the agreement, which had meanwhile been released to the press. The salient features were: Reparation of the breach of international law, safeguarding peace and strengthening Belgium's security, particularly by means of the confirmation and expansion of the British guarantee. In detail, the Minister President emphasized the complete unanimity of the four remaining Locarno Powers and the fact that the agreement constituted one indivisible whole. He stressed that the agreement had confirmed and assured the continued existence of the Locarno Treaty, which would remain in force until, as he hoped, it was replaced by something better; in any case, the position of the Western Powers had been consolidated by the London agreement. Van Zeeland dealt in particular

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Extracts from this speech are printed in *Documents on International Affairs 1936* (London, 1937), pp. 143-151.



detail with the strengthening of Belgian security by the promise of automatic support (to be worked out by the General Staffs) from the Guarantor Powers during the envisaged provisional arrangement and the eventual final one. On the basis of the London agreement peace was in any case assured. If the agreement were realized in its entirety, the danger of war would disappear. Germany, to whom far-reaching concessions had been made (*inter alia* abandonment of the demand for the withdrawal of troops from the Rhineland), could certainly accept the recommendations contained in the agreement, which were not made in any spirit of hatred or enmity. Finally, the Minister President's remark that in London the possibility of a recourse to force had been excluded appears worthy of note.

The Minister President's remarks, especially the passages about General Staff contacts with Britain, were greeted with lively applause. The text of the speech has been despatched.<sup>3</sup>

BRÄUER

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<sup>3</sup> Under cover of report A 117 of Mar. 20 (6710/E507829-36).

## No. 168

3242/712491-92

*Memorandum by an Official of the Foreign Minister's Secretariat*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 20, 1936.

Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff informed me that a private meeting of the Council, not attended by the press, was held from 6:30 till about 8 o'clock. The German Delegation went to the meeting and on arrival at the hall found on their table, as did the others, the draft of the Locarno protocol,<sup>2</sup> which Eden had sent to the Members of the Council. Before the meeting began there was some astonishment among the Council members at this transmission of the paper. Bruce then opened the session and asked whether the Council was prepared to discuss this document. All the delegates except the Belgian and the German gave their views. The German Delegation remained silent throughout the whole meeting and took no part whatsoever in the discussion, although Titulescu in particular made attempts to draw the Germans into the debate.

The views of all the delegates had overwhelmingly been that the paper contained many things which did not concern the Council and that it was therefore necessarily very doubtful whether there was any

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<sup>1</sup> The document here printed is unsigned; the signature is taken from another copy (63/43942-43) which also bears the marginal note: "St[ate] S[ecretary's] Office, Mar. 20, 9 p.m., Ko[tze]."

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19, see Editors' Note, p. 208.

point in a Council discussion of this paper. This view was advocated with particular emphasis by Beck, who asserted that, in point of fact, none of the Locarno Powers' agreements concerned the Council. Of interest was a statement by Grandi, who had said that he could express no opinion with regard to the question put by the President of the Council, because his Government had as yet no knowledge whatever of the paper. It would only arrive in Rome this evening, and he could not expect to receive any instructions before tomorrow at the earliest. Some astonishment was caused amongst Council members that a paper which had been co-initialled by the Italian representative was still completely unknown to the Italian Government.

The meeting was then closed without the question of the usefulness of holding a discussion on the paper having been brought any nearer a conclusion in any direction.

The next meeting is to take place on Monday afternoon.

I gave Herr Dieckhoff a brief account of the interview with Ambassador Attolico,<sup>3</sup> from whose attitude it was also apparent that the Italians were not yet informed about the paper.

When Herr Dieckhoff asked, I confirmed, that the paper would be published in Germany this evening. The Delegation hoped that our press would lay particular emphasis on the intolerable consequences of the Locarno Powers' demands and thus afford the German Delegation support in their fight against the agreement. He further suggested that our Missions, especially those accredited to Powers represented on the Council, should be informed as promptly as possible, in order that the Council members might be influenced in this way too.<sup>4</sup>

[v. KOTZE]<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 170.

<sup>4</sup> A further report on the Council meeting was sent in the Delegation's telegram No. 3 of Mar. 20 (6710/E507686) despatched at 9:35 p.m.

## No. 169

6710/E507665

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 20, 1936.

II R 629.

Yesterday evening I had a long and friendly conversation with the French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> at the Egyptian Legation. The Ambassador complained that he was being reproached at home with not having correctly assessed the situation in Germany. Consequently he had recorded all the statements made by the Führer, the Foreign Minister

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<sup>1</sup> André François-Poncet.

and myself, but particularly those by the Foreign Minister, in which, right up into March, it had been denied that there was any intention of occupying the Rhineland. He repeated some of these conversations with photographic accuracy.

The Ambassador declared, as he had already often done, that we had not assessed the situation in France correctly. Thus we had not understood that Sarraut, as a member of the Left, had to use the terminology of the Right in order to survive in Parliament. Sarraut and Flandin had wished to continue Laval's policy, and Sarraut himself was convinced that he had been more conciliatory towards Germany than anyone else before him.

The Ambassador described our legal position in the dispute over the Locarno Pact as being very weak; on the other hand, there was another, extremely effective, argument, of which we scarcely made any use at all, namely, that no consultations had taken place and that France had concluded the Soviet Pact without the concurrence of all her Locarno allies, and/or Germany.

The Ambassador was obviously not informed about the latest Locarno resolutions in London.<sup>2</sup> He recommended above all playing for time in order to give passions a chance to continue to calm down. Along these lines he recommended, quite generally, the acceptance of all proposals which would tend to postpone decisions.

BÜLOW

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<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

## No. 170

6710/E507681

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 20, 1936.

II R 636.

The Italian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> asked to see me urgently. He had been telephoned by Suvich and asked what were our reactions to the London Locarno protocol.<sup>2</sup> As he knew nothing of the contents of this protocol apart from a few imprecise newspaper reports, I had first to explain the contents to him. I followed this up by expressing our displeasure and astonishment that, in spite of repeated Italian assurances, Grandi had agreed to the London programme, which was unacceptable to us on all points. The Ambassador thereupon emphasized that Grandi had only signed *ad referendum* and that the decision

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<sup>1</sup> Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

lay with Rome. He said we could rest absolutely assured that Italy would not take part in any sanctions. With regard to the various points of the London protocol, he was only interested in whether they contained any threat of, or preparation for, sanctions. I told him that the latter was undoubtedly the case; it was a deployment for the threat and/or application of sanctions. The Ambassador thereupon left me very hurriedly to telephone to Savich again.<sup>3</sup>

BÜLOW

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Transmitted to H[err] v. Hassell by telephone. R[enthe]-F[ink], Mar. 21." A memorandum by Hassell of even date on this telephone conversation is not printed (M286/M011842-43). In telegram No. 39 of Mar. 21 (6710/E507868) Hassell, referring to this telephone conversation, reported: "The Deputy *Chef de Cabinet*, to whom Herr von Plessen pointed out today that substantial parts of the draft proposals of the Locarno Powers were not acceptable, said that Italy was opposed to any attitude which might lead to sanctions against Germany. The draft did not correspond to instructions sent from Rome. To Plessen's objection that Grandi had none the less helped to draw it up, the *Chef de Cabinet* admitted technical collaboration but stated that the Italian Government's views were still pending."

## No. 171

7849/E569607-08

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 20, 1936.

II Ung. 233.

1. The Hungarian Minister called upon me today and stated on instructions from his Government, in similar terms to those reported by Herr von Mackensen,<sup>1</sup> the purpose of the meeting of the Rome Pact Powers. The only new point was the information that a Protocol or at least a communiqué would be signed stating that the policy of the three Powers parties to the Rome Pact had remained unaltered since 1934. This declaration was, the Minister said, directed against the Czech Danubian plans and the like.<sup>2</sup>

2. The Minister then spoke of Minister President Göring's efforts at mediation and said that the Serbs had now asked Herr Göring to point out the friendly references to Hungary in Stojadinović's speech and it was also recognized in Budapest that this speech showed goodwill.<sup>3</sup> Further, the Yugoslavs seem to wish to have a similar list<sup>4</sup> of points of friction with Hungary conveyed by Minister President Göring to the Government in Budapest. Kánya had recently declared that he was ready to have a meeting of Ministers with the Yugoslavs, were

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 21 of Mar. 19 (6114/E454615-16).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 165, footnotes 1 and 2; also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 543, 558, 559, 593.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 130, footnote 4.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 130, footnote 3.



anything tangible to come of the negotiations in which Minister President Göring was acting as mediator.

3. The Minister then questioned me very thoroughly on the distinction we had made, in our proposals of March 7,<sup>5</sup> between the Western and Eastern Powers. It was of particular interest to his country that no treaty between Germany and Czechoslovakia should appear to sanction the Russo-Czech treaty.

Finally, he asked with some concern whether our relations with Italy had not been clouded by the events in London. I told him that the Italians had given an explanation here which was, as such, satisfactory but the effect of which remained to be seen. One must await developments in London.

BÜLOW

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

## No. 172

6114/E454624-80

### *The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

SECRET  
A 1629

VIENNA, March 20, 1936.

Received March 23.

II Oe. 861.

Subject: The political development of the Austrian working classes and its significance for the Reich.

I have been kept currently informed by reliable informants since October 1935 about the developments in the Austrian labour movement—in so far as it formally supports the Government. The situation as it has crystallized today deserves a closer appreciation since this Austrian labour movement is a factor which might have important political effects in the coming discussions with the German Reich.

The Trade Union Federation [*Gewerkschaftsbund*], the official body representing the workers set up by the Government, consists of about 400,000 members. These comprise workmen, artisans, small traders, and officials of the Post Office and the railways. The two last named categories are particularly significant, as from these circles pressure can be exerted on services of national importance.

The militant organization of the Trade Union Federation is the "Freiheitsbund" [Freedom League] with a membership of just under 50,000. The President of the Trade Union Federation is the joiner Johannes Staud who, since the end of 1933, has been Chairman of the Vienna Chamber of Workers [*Arbeitskammer*]. His closest collaborator is the hotel proprietor, Kankal. The military direction of the *Freiheitsbund* is in the hands of an ex-officer, Colonel Eller.

The Trade Union Federation, under pressure from the leaders of the *Freiheitsbund*, has, in the course of the past year, moved increasingly into opposition to the present Government. The reasons for this are partly personal and partly practical. They are personal in so far as the previous leader of the Labour movement, Staatsrat Kunschak, has, at the instigation of the Vice Chancellor, Starhemberg, been excluded from political affairs, as has his friend the prelate Dr. Drexel, formerly President of the Federal Statistical Office. There has existed a deadly feud for years between Kunschak and Starhemberg and the sole aim of Kunschak, who is regarded here as one of the most capable men in Austria, is to fight Starhemberg. The practical reasons for the opposition of the Trade Union Federation and the *Freiheitsbund* to the present Government are chiefly rooted in the bad social conditions of the workers of the new Austria, in the bitterness felt over the impossible economic conditions, in the extraordinary poverty which exists in some parts and, despite Government statements to the contrary, in the unemployment which has been only slightly alleviated. In addition, this Austrian labour movement, even in its ideals, differs greatly from the programme of the present régime and particularly from that of the leadership of the *Heimwehr*. The Trade Union Federation and the *Freiheitsbund* see in the *Heimwehr* their bitterest opponent and not only on grounds of rivalry. To them the *Heimwehr* is the shield of the liberal anti-social-minded *entrepreneur*. Spiritually, the labour movement derives its ideas from Lueger's<sup>1</sup> political programme, and supports his anti-Semitism in a more drastic form. Particularly during recent months, leaders in both organizations have popularized the view that the social problem cannot be solved apart from the Jewish question. From the point of view of political tactics, this view derives further support from the fact that, at the present time, anti-Semitism represents the most effective slogan for attracting the masses of the Austrian people, for indeed the Austrian people have, in general, always been particularly sensitive to the Jewish question.

Through tried and absolutely reliable go-betweens it has proved possible recently to exert increasing influence upon the political objectives of the Trade Union Federation and the *Freiheitsbund*. It has proved possible to enlist the latent anti-Semitism in order to instigate a number of acts which, of course, have been toned down in the enclosed reports<sup>2</sup> because of the throttling of the press. Particularly effective was a leaflet operation staged by members of the *Freiheitsbund*, whereby 300,000 leaflets were distributed bearing the headline "Jews! Buy only from your co-religionists". This leaflet operation caused tremendous excitement amongst the Jews in Vienna and great bitterness amongst the Aryan

<sup>1</sup> Karl Lueger, founder of the Christian Social Party and Burgomaster of Vienna, 1897-1910.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; presumably press clippings.

population. As the police sympathize to a great extent with the Trade Union Federation, it has not been possible, in spite of the utmost exertions by the Jews, to identify the instigators of this leaflet operation.

On Sunday, March 15, in the Hall of the Musikverein in Vienna, "a grand rally of the Freiheitsbund" was held in which 4,000 members took part, partly in uniform and armed. The main speakers were the Landsführer of Styria, Müller, and Staatsrat Leopold Kunschak. Both speakers criticized the Government's social policy most severely and attacked, in particular, the Heimatschutz. Staatsrat Kunschak spoke in detail about the Jewish question. He demanded that the Jewish problem should at last be recognized and appropriate action taken (see enclosures).<sup>2</sup>

The next important demonstration by the Trade Union Federation and the Freiheitsbund is to be held in Vienna on May 3, 1936. It is proposed to have about 20,000 armed Freiheitsbund members parade. On March 16 a meeting of the leaders of the Trade Union Federation and the Freiheitsbund took place in Vienna, at which all the Länder were represented. The lines on which the May Day demonstration should be run were laid down. In addition to questions of organization, the following points for a political platform were drawn up:

(1) A fundamental change in Austria's foreign policy and, especially, a speedy *rapprochement* with the German Reich.

(2) Pacification at home and an understanding with the National Socialists on the basis of Austrian independence.

(3) Defence against Jewry and legislation to deal with the Jews.

(4) The holding of plebiscites.

At this meeting there was also privately discussed the question of whether and in what way contact with the German Government or German Legation should be established.

The Freiheitsbund received financial support from the Austrian State up to the last May Day demonstration in 1935. At the instigation of the Heimwehr, these monies were cancelled. The leading men of the labour movement, amongst whom are some outspoken National Socialists, must now rightly calculate that they will only be in a position to realize their programme if they dispose of an adequate organization and military power. For the forces opposing them will naturally do their utmost to thwart their designs. Vice Chancellor Starhemberg has already ordered the Freiheitsbund three times to surrender its arms. Twice this order was answered evasively and once bluntly refused.

The funds required to carry out the proposed May Day demonstration by the Trade Union Federation amount, according to the enclosure,<sup>3</sup> to about 170,000 Schilling. Of this amount the Freiheits-

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed (6114/E454631).



bund can raise about 80,000 Schilling from its own funds, so that about 90,000 Schilling would be required from elsewhere.

The signal success of the rally of the *Freiheitsbund* on March 15, which went off without disturbance, may be taken as proof of the determination of the leaders to carry out their programme. It has further revealed that the Government apparently does not feel strong enough to take measures against the movement as long as, to outward appearances, it dons the mantle of the régime. It was the rehearsal for the great May Day demonstration.

For us the question now arises as to how far this opposition movement can be made useful to the political aims of the Reich.

Now that the Austrian NSDAP has been forced more and more into inactivity by the recent wave of arrests and prosecutions, it appears advisable to seek other allies. If, as is probable, we shall have to discuss the Austrian question in detail at the forthcoming international conference, it would, in my opinion, be of the greatest importance to introduce into the arena an opposition movement which, however, in the eyes of the world, is unequivocally Austrian in outlook and which, by bringing strong pressure to bear and demanding a *rapprochement* with the Reich, might mean substantial support for us.

In view of the early date fixed for the projected May Day demonstration and the need for the funds which are still required for it, I request a decision in principle, as early as possible.<sup>4</sup>

PAPEN

P.S. In the meantime there are already noticeable a number of repercussions in the Jewish question as a result of the action of the *Freiheitsbund*: On March 19, Father S. H. Bichlmair, one of the most prominent and leading representatives of the Order of Jesuits in Austria, spoke here on the Jewish question. The Deputy Mayor Kresse spoke on the defence of native trades and industries against Jewish influence. Both speeches attracted much attention and led to lively comment in the press. Staatsrat Dr. Tzöbl, the Editor of the *Österreichische Korrespondenz für volksdeutsche Auslandsarbeit*, wrote a leading article on the same question which also received much attention.

P[APEN]

<sup>4</sup> Renthe-Fink referring to this request in a letter to Erbach, Counsellor at the Legation in Vienna, dated Apr. 8 (6114/E454632) wrote: "... I assume that Herr v. Papen had an opportunity during his last visit to Berlin to raise the matter with the Führer and Chancellor. As, however, we have not heard anything about this, I should be grateful for information as to whether my assumption is correct and, if this is so, as to the outcome of the conversation." This bears the marginal note "N.B. Pr[ince] Erbach has stated that a reply will be forthcoming when H[err] v. Papen returns from leave. Hei[lnburg]." Replying in a letter of Apr. 24 (6114/E454636-37) to Renthe-Fink, Papen wrote that Hitler had displayed particular interest in the document here printed and had authorized him orally to take all possible steps which the situation permitted to support this development. Papen had already employed funds of his own and asked the Foreign Ministry to make a further sum available to him for this purpose. See also documents Nos. 319 and 351.



## No. 173

9660/E681031-32

*Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger*<sup>1</sup>

WARSAW, March 20, 1936.

IV Po. 2223.

DEAR HERR ROEDIGER: I venture to draw your attention to the following questions.

In a recent telegram<sup>2</sup> I pointed out that, in my view, the Poles were concerned to derive positive benefits for themselves, too, from their cooperation in the major questions. Beck's tactics in London appear—as far as I can judge from the Polish press—to confirm my view. His claim that all interested States must take part in the negotiations is intended to secure for Poland participation in the coming deliberations. Moreover, contrary to his previous attitude, he too has now adopted the thesis of the indivisibility of peace, which leads one to conclude that he has some special intentions. The same idea comes out even more clearly in the demand which constantly crops up in all reports from London in the semi-official press here, namely that the fashion in which peace is safeguarded in the East should be no different from that in the West. One may therefore deduce from all these phrases that M. Beck is aiming to have the German-Polish Non-Aggression Declaration<sup>3</sup>, too, extended to twenty-five years. In the very first conversation, when I communicated the memorandum,<sup>4</sup> Beck pointed out to me that the proposed duration of the Western non-aggression treaties [passage illegible] would evoke unfavourable comment from Polish public opinion. In point of fact the Polish press has made no comment whatsoever on this question—which is presumably due to their having been so instructed. On the other hand, this theme appears to have been thoroughly discussed in diplomatic conversations. I hear that Lipski put it to the Italian Ambassador in Berlin that the extension of the German-Polish non-aggression obligation to a twenty-five year period was a self-evident consequence of the Chancellor's proposals. Yesterday the news—which I assume to be premature—came from London that we had already stated that we were prepared to agree to this Polish desire.<sup>5</sup>

You will hardly expect me to commend such a development. But,

<sup>1</sup> The original of this document has been badly damaged by fire and some passages are no longer legible. A transcript has been filmed as 9660/E681033-34.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 82.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 19.

<sup>5</sup> This sentence has a query against it in the margin.

as I do not hold it to be impossible, I would venture to suggest considering whether, in that case, it might not be the right moment to obtain something from Poland for the German minority, whose fate in spite of the policy of understanding in recent years has unfortunately not improved.<sup>6</sup>

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

MOLTKE

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note against this passage in Roediger's handwriting: "Yes."

## No. 174

6710/E507843-44

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 21, 1936.

II R 670.

The Italian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> called on me at noon today to inform me that, after his telephonic conversation yesterday with Suvich about our attitude towards the London Memorandum,<sup>2</sup> he had this morning received a telephone call from Mussolini himself. The latter had told him that Grandi had been instructed to point out in London that the Italian Government still fully reserved their attitude towards the Memorandum. He was further authorized to tell us, as had, indeed, already been officially announced in Rome, that the Italian Government felt themselves to have complete liberty of action in their decisions concerning the Memorandum. Finally Mussolini had suggested that, if we laid value on synchronization, that is, on coordinating the timing and substance of the attitudes of the two Governments, we should inform him in good time of our intentions and attitude. The Ambassador was instructed to draw particular attention to this essential prerequisite. Furthermore, Mussolini had also stated that, at the meeting due to take place today and tomorrow with the representatives of Austria and Hungary, nothing directed against Germany would be decided upon or discussed.

The Ambassador requested that Mussolini's message should be brought to the knowledge of the Führer and Chancellor. He added an urgent plea that we should keep him *au courant* with our decisions.

The Ambassador then went through the London Memorandum with me once again, with a view to seeing whether it contained any possibilities for a compromise. I pointed out to him that we felt compelled

<sup>1</sup> Bernardo Attolico.

<sup>2</sup> For Bülow's memorandum on his conversation with Attolico on Mar. 20 see document No. 170; for the "London Memorandum", i.e., the proposals of the Locarno Powers, see Editors' Note, p. 208.

to reject all the points in the memorandum *in toto* and that we could not regard this document even as a basis for negotiation. The Ambassador was somewhat suspicious about this at first, as he thought that, although our morning press had, admittedly, adopted a negative attitude, it had in no way been violent in its expression.

The Ambassador then made a private suggestion to me, of which his Government had no knowledge, but which he had already made first to the British Ambassador<sup>3</sup> and later to the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>4</sup> that a compromise should be reached on a basis separating the German troops in the Rhineland from the main body [*Verband*] of the Army and giving them a special status, such as that of Frontier Police (on the Russian model).

BÜLOW<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Sir Eric Phipps.

<sup>4</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Transmitted to Rome and London, R[enthe]-F[ink], Mar. 21." The document here printed was transmitted, with minor alterations, to Rome as telegram No. 60 of Mar. 21 and, with the omission of the passages about Attolico's telephone conversation with Suvich and Mussolini's statement concerning the meeting with the Austrian and Hungarian representatives, to London as telegram No. 64 of Mar. 21 (6710/E507845-47).

## No. 175

6710/E507870

### *The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

Cape Town No. 13  
of March 21

CAPE TOWN, March 21, 1936—5:23 p.m.  
Received March 21—6:20 p.m.  
II R 677.

With reference to my telegram No. 11 of March 17.<sup>1</sup>

Both the Government and the public here are astonished at Britain's far-reaching concessions *vis-à-vis* France in the matter of the Locarno Powers' proposals<sup>2</sup> to Germany. The rejection in particular of an occupation of the frontier area by neutral forces as being unilateral and unnecessary given the lack of any aggressive German designs, and the rejection of [an appeal to] the Hague Court, on the grounds that a decision has already been taken by the Council of the League, would meet with full understanding here.

Bodenstein<sup>3</sup>, however, drew attention to his statement reported in

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E507309). This telegram reported press comment sympathetic to the German peace proposals.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> H. D. J. Bodenstein, Secretary of State in the South African Ministry for External Affairs.

telegram No. 10 of March 16,<sup>4</sup> and thought that the time had come for Germany, should she reject them [the proposals], simultaneously to make a voluntary peace gesture, such as limiting the number of troops in the Rhineland and leaving unoccupied a strip along the frontier for the duration of the negotiations.

WIEHL

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 127.

## No. 176

6710/E507810-12

*Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

URGENT

BERLIN, March 21, 1936—5:54 p.m.  
e.o. II R 657.

Although a decision by the Reich Government is still outstanding, there can be no doubt as to the German assessment of the London Locarno resolutions.<sup>2</sup> The demand that the case be submitted to the Hague Court is wrong, since that tribunal of the League of Nations has already been prejudiced by the decision reached on March 19 by its highest political tribunal, namely, the Council.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, The Hague is not competent to judge of the politico-military aspects which are decisive, and it is, to say the least, doubtful whether it has power to interpret fundamental provisions (Art. 16) of the League of Nations Covenant.

In the ostensible interim régime for the Rhineland there is a complete lack of reciprocity, with the result that there is renewed discrimination against Germany. Particularly unprecedented is the creation of a new 20 km. zone, to be occupied by foreign troops; this is completely pointless in both military and political respects and is, therefore, nothing more than a deliberate humiliation. The proposed international Control Commission, too, represents a reversion to the methods of Versailles. Under such a Commission parity would be illusory since nothing is to be supervised on the French and Belgian sides. This set-up is merely intended to serve as a basis for a new Rhineland statute. The duration of the interim régime is to be dependent entirely on the whim of the other Powers, since they can prolong the negotiations for as long as they like.

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Rome (No. 59), Paris, Ankara, Madrid, Warsaw, Buenos Aires (No. 35), Bucharest, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Quito (No. 15), Santiago di Chile, Athens, Berne (No. 37), Budapest, Stockholm (No. 20), Oslo, The Hague (No. 34) and Washington, the Consulate General at Sydney and the Consulate at Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 203.



A final settlement is being prejudiced in the most dangerous manner. The Western Pacts are not to be couched in terms of parity but are to be linked with special commitments among the four Western Powers directed against Germany. Furthermore, these Powers have already committed themselves to restricting for all time at least the erection of fortifications in the Rhineland.

The purpose of the resolution proposed to the Council of the League of Nations is a renewed defamation of Germany, just as after the Stresa Conference.

Political and military agreements among the guarantor Powers are designed to bring political pressure to bear on Germany in the event of her rejection of their demands. The vague proposals for a general peace conference are intended merely to out-bid the German proposals. Noteworthy here is that Germany's return to the League of Nations is only to be put on the agenda of the conference; thus it is to be made dependent upon our good behaviour.

The Council has, in point of fact, been confronted by the Locarno Powers with a *fait accompli* and is only to be made use of to give moral cover to this *fait accompli*, and/or to spur on the members of the League of Nations still further in the direction of sanctions. It is to be hoped that the neutral members of the Council will not submit to this. You should avail yourself of every opportunity to make use of the above-mentioned points at your end.

NEURATH<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> A copy of the document here printed was sent under cover of despatch II R 657 II of Mar. 21 to the German Delegation in London (6710/E507814), with reference to the Delegation's telegram No. 3 of Mar. 20 (see document No. 168, footnote 4). The text was repeated by telegram of Mar. 23 to the Missions in Belgrade (No. 32), Sofia, Moscow, Kovno, Riga and Tallinn, by cipher letter of the same date to the Legations in Prague and Vienna and under cover of a despatch of Mar. 24 to the Embassy to the Holy See (6710/E507818-22; 824). See also document No. 179, footnote 2.

## No. 177

6710/E507856-57

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

MOST URGENT  
No. 61

BERLIN, March 21, 1936—9:20 p.m.  
e.o. II R 673.

For the Ambassador personally.

You should convey the following to Mussolini on instructions from the Führer as quickly as possible, but in any case before Monday midday.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., Mar. 23.

Mussolini knows the document we have received, containing the resolutions of the Locarno Powers.<sup>2</sup> He will see for himself that we cannot accept most of the demands contained therein. This applies particularly to the demand that we should accept a ruling from the Hague Court of Arbitration, as well as that we should permit the occupation by foreign troops of a neutralized zone on German territory, and finally to the supervision by a commission of the measures demanded of us. We do not intend to allow the threads of the discussion to be broken off unless demands in the nature of an ultimatum [*ultimative Forderungen*] are made to us; we shall therefore reply even to the document of the Locarno Powers, for all its unprecedented character, in the course of the next few days. We would greatly welcome it, however, if the Italian Government of their own accord were at the first opportunity to reject as impossible the above-mentioned three points and if possible before Monday afternoon. We would ourselves, of course, not make any reference whatever to this. We believe that during the Abyssinian-Italian conflict we were, indeed, able to do Mussolini some service through our benevolent neutrality. It would represent psychological support for us if he were, of his own accord, to take the step outlined above.

NEURATH

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<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

## No. 178

6710/E508053-66

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1275

LONDON, March 21, 1936.

Received March 24.

II R 726.

Subject: The first phase of the crisis.

With the return of Flandin to Paris,<sup>1</sup> the European crisis, caused by France's attitude towards the remilitarization of the Rhineland zone, has emerged from the state of acute danger of war and entered upon a new phase. I leave it to the German delegation sent to London for the negotiations to report on and analyse this new phase. It may, however, be of interest to glance back over all the various stages of the first phase and to record their salient points.

First and foremost must be placed the fact that Europe only just escaped a general conflagration. France alone is responsible for matters having been brought to such a pass, while Belgium, the other

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<sup>1</sup> M. Flandin left London for Paris on Mar. 20.

State "guaranteed" by the Locarno Rhine Pact, for all her pursuit of what she considered to be her interests, has shown throughout a certain degree of moderation.

The first moment of acute danger of war occurred shortly after German troops had marched into the Rhineland zone. From the unanimous reports received from reliable French informants I know that a section of the French Cabinet, consisting of some three or four Ministers and under the leadership of the influential Minister of Posts, Mandel, strongly urged the immediate mobilization of the French army. That this mobilization with all the grave consequences that it would presumably have entailed did not take place must apparently be attributed primarily to the opposition of General Maurin, the Minister for War. General Gamelin, the Chief of the General Staff, is also said to have advised against mobilization, saying that one could not mobilize an army unless one was determined to strike.

The arguments put forward by the French Ministers in favour of immediate mobilization were based primarily on the thesis which, even now, the French Government have still not abandoned, that the entry of German troops into the Rhineland zone met the conditions set forth in Article 2 (1) of the Rhineland Pact, i.e., that it constituted a flagrant breach of the provisions relating to demilitarization and was an act of unprovoked aggression, which, on account of the massing of troops in the zone, called for immediate action. Those advocating mobilization were obviously further of the opinion that the surest way of obtaining full support from Britain was to create *faits accomplis* as quickly as possible. In this connection some part will also have been played by the assumption, which was probably not disputed by the French General Staff either, that the reconstruction of the German Wehrmacht on land, in the air and at sea had not yet progressed sufficiently far to enable Germany successfully to wage war against powerful adversaries. These circles also assumed that financially, economically and politically Germany was not yet sufficiently strong and consolidated to be able to offer prolonged resistance. Finally, this group of arch-enemies of the new Germany were also influenced by the disastrous idea that here was a favourable opportunity to "liberate" the German people from their new form of government and to lead them back to other forms, i.e., to impotence.

If the first assault by the French warmongers met with no success, however, this did not mean that the idea of mobilizing was dead and buried. On the contrary, it continued to play its part in the days that followed and seems to have been one of the threats apparently used by the French during the subsequent negotiations in London.

In London, developments in the first few days after March 7 assumed an entirely different form to those in Paris. Here, too, there was a considerable upsurge of feeling. But the press at once adopted

a comparatively calm attitude, and, as early as March 9, the Foreign Secretary, Eden, stated in the House of Commons<sup>2</sup> that there was here no case of flagrant aggressive action.

The clash between the two points of view occurred on March 10 in Paris<sup>3</sup> and, as I gathered from Eden's own words, must have been extremely violent. Evidently only in Paris were the British Ministers made completely aware of the full danger of the situation. The unrestrained behaviour of the French and the whole atmosphere of Paris made a tremendous impression on the British Foreign Secretary, and, in particular, on Lord Halifax who was not very conversant with international problems. After a two hours' discussion with the French, and having consulted London, the two Ministers, therefore, decided to suggest that the further negotiations, and also the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations envisaged for Geneva, should be transferred to London. This proved to be a wise move, for thanks to it the French Ministers were able to see and hear with their own eyes and ears how cool the attitude of the British people was towards the loud outcries of the French, while in the spacious and calm atmosphere of London the Council of the League was comparatively withdrawn from the influence of international agitators with their gallows-bird faces who were swarming around it, to the obvious discomfiture of the latter.

Then, on March 12,<sup>4</sup> the great struggle between Britain and France began here in London. The British Government had tried to alleviate their difficult position by requesting the German Government to make the familiar "symbolical gesture" of withdrawing part of the troops which had marched into the Rhineland zone.<sup>5</sup> The assurance given by Germany<sup>6</sup> that, during the period of the negotiations on the German proposals, the German troops would not be increased in number and, nor would they, be moved nearer to the French or Belgian frontiers, was merely brushed aside as worthless by the French. By continually emphasizing that the conditions actually existed for the immediate resort to measures of force, as provided for in the Rhine Pact, the French, in the bluntest possible manner, repeatedly confronted the British Cabinet with the alternatives, either of collective action against Germany, details of which were still to be defined, or of a breach of treaty. In this connection they made the most of Britain's leading rôle in the sanctions battle against Italy, which was conducted by Mr. Eden himself. They threatened to pillory a possible British default, and at the same time threatened that France would abandon the principle of collective security and withdraw from the

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 113.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 81.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 84.



League of Nations. It would also appear that they once again made play with the idea of mobilization and of an ultimatum to Germany, clearly in the conviction that, in the event of hostilities breaking out, Britain would after all be compelled to honour the obligation to afford assistance which the French maintain she has assumed. At the same time they asserted that joint and energetic action by Britain and France would compel Germany to give way, while any hesitation on the part of Britain was the one thing which would lead to war. In this connection they adduced the familiar false doctrine that, in 1914 too, Britain could have prevented war by taking up a definite position against Germany immediately, while her hesitant attitude at that time made her share the responsibility for the outbreak of war.

On the afternoon of March 12, a meeting of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Commons<sup>7</sup> took place at the same time as the Ministers' discussions. At this meeting Sir Austen Chamberlain, who had hitherto imposed a certain restraint upon himself, abandoned his reserve and proclaimed with the whole force of his personality that Britain was in duty bound to support France unreservedly. He said that France would have been fully entitled to take immediate coercive measures against Germany and to demand British cooperation. That she had not so far done so but had appealed to the League of Nations instead was an act of great moderation. But, in accordance with Article 4(2) of the Rhine Pact, after the Council of the League of Nations had given its verdict, Britain's obligation to go to the immediate aid of France would remain in full force. This was an obligation which Britain was in honour bound to fulfil. Sir Austen Chamberlain was supported by Winston Churchill, who painted the German menace in the blackest colours. In the absence of any solid body of opposition, these two influential personages succeeded by their joint action in winning over to their side about three-quarters of the members of the Committee present, even though the latter may not perhaps have fully appreciated the direct danger of war which was thus being conjured up.

The reports on these events reaching the public suddenly spread disquiet and anxiety to a public opinion which had hitherto remained calm and collected. Recognition of the threatening danger was accordingly clearly reflected in the evening papers of March 12 and the morning papers of the following day. The appeal to Germany to contribute to the relaxation of the extreme tension by making "a symbolic gesture" became more and more urgent and more general. The attitude of the military and naval departments towards our Service Attachés showed a marked coolness, and it was only with the

<sup>7</sup> Presumably a reference to a meeting of the non-official Foreign Affairs Committee of the Government's supporters in the British Parliament (cf. *The Times* of Mar. 13, 1936).

Air Force that it was possible to maintain our friendly contacts unchanged.

Consequently the situation in the late evening of March 12 and on March 13 looked thoroughly grave, and it seemed as though the French had it in their power by taking aggressive action against Germany to force Britain on to their side against her will. Above all, however, it became clear that, at best, Britain could only buy off Flandin's strangle-hold on her at the price of a promise of some sort of close military ties with France.

On the afternoon of Friday, March 13, the Members of Parliament toured their constituencies, as is the custom here in times of grave decision, in order to ascertain on the spot the views of the electorate. They spoke of Germany's breach of treaty, of Britain's obligations towards France and Belgium and of the necessity, while doing one's utmost to safeguard peace, of keeping one's word. The result of these explanations was a complete failure. Everywhere the Members of Parliament were given to understand that the British people had no intention of again going to war without reason for the sake of France. Germany, they said, had been shabbily treated in the peace treaty and, by marching into the Rhineland zone, had only done what any other country also did, i.e., secured her own land against attacks. Whether one admired or condemned the new Germany, the French methods of continual coercion and everlasting complaining were not to the liking of the British people and would be repudiated by them.

When the Members of Parliament returned to London on Sunday they reported almost unanimously, as one well-known M.P. told me in so many words: "A pro-French policy hasn't a hope. The whole country is pro-German." Since then I have received confirmation of these events from numerous other M.P.'s. Side by side with this reaction in the country at large, a stiffening of public opinion against playing with war and the danger of war was becoming apparent in London too. Everywhere amongst the British acquaintances of the Embassy's staff and right up to the highest circles of society there could be detected a sharp reaction against the blackmailing methods of the French and against the conduct of the British warmongers. Germans once more became very welcome guests.

In the meantime there was, however, no relaxation in the Franco-British struggle. Admittedly, on the evening of Saturday, March 14, there were indications that an awareness of the British public's disapproval of an anti-German adventure over the Rhineland question was beginning to have its effect on the attitude of the French. It looked as if Flandin had finally adopted the line, not so much of forcing Britain into joint action against Germany, as of blackmailing her into concluding a military alliance with France against Germany. It was along these lines, with constant threats from Flandin to break off

and go home, in an atmosphere of mutual annoyance, and with, indeed, considerable annoyance between Belgium and France, which found expression in Flandin's sharp rejection of a Belgian compromise proposal, that the negotiations dragged on until March 19, when that abortion, the proposals of the four Locarno Powers, was brought to birth.

In the meantime the reaction of the public to the blackmailing activities of the French had become more and more pronounced. The Foreign Affairs Committee of the Conservative Party met on Tuesday, March 17. Strengthened by the impressions gained in their constituencies, 200 Conservative Members of Parliament had joined in a solid phalanx to combat the warmongering activities of Chamberlain and Churchill. Sir Austen was sharply taken to task and evidently so thoroughly, that, without giving up his well-known thesis, he has since sedulously taken a substantially different tone in his public utterances. I have been informed of these events, too, authoritatively but, of course, in strict confidence, by persons who were present.

The meeting of the Council of the League of Nations then distracted the attention of public opinion to some extent from the deliberations of the Locarno Powers and turned it to the question of whether the Reich Government would accept the invitation which the Council had extended to it. Our eventual reply accepting it was welcomed with a sigh of relief, for it was assumed that the danger of war had thereby been finally dispelled. At the same time the Army and the Navy of their own accord became noticeably more friendly towards our Service representatives here.

In view of the above account there can be no doubt that war, if indeed it formed part of the French Government's programme (possibly only as a contingency), was prevented by Britain alone. This assertion immediately raises the further question as to how things might have developed if, instead of Anthony Eden, Sir Austen Chamberlain had been appointed to succeed Sir Samuel Hoare<sup>8</sup> (as had been generally anticipated here about Christmas time), or if Baldwin, before the start of the crisis, had (as also seemed likely for a time), appointed Winston Churchill as over-all Minister for Defence.<sup>9</sup> It is highly probable that, if the obstinate signatory<sup>10</sup> of the Locarno Pact, who so wholeheartedly supported the French thesis of flagrant aggression and Britain's indisputable obligation to render immediate aid, had been at the Foreign Office, the French, secure in the knowledge that Britain would cooperate, would have

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<sup>8</sup> Sir Samuel Hoare resigned on Dec. 18, 1935 (see *The Times* of Dec. 19, 1935); Mr. Eden's appointment as his successor as Foreign Secretary was made on Dec. 22 (see *The Times* of Dec. 23, 1935). Bismarck reported on the background of this appointment in telegram No. 246 of Dec. 23, 1935 (M205/M006588-89).

<sup>9</sup> In despatch A 1140 of Mar. 14 (K1991/K515226) the Embassy in London reported the "entirely unexpected" appointment on the previous day of the Attorney-General, Sir Thomas Inskip, as Minister for the Coordination of Defence.

<sup>10</sup> i.e., Sir Austen Chamberlain.



yielded to the impulse to take ultimative and, possibly, forcible action against Germany. Matters might have developed on similar lines, although indeed with greater obstacles, if Winston Churchill had been in charge of the British war-machine.

What, then, were the individual factors which, in Britain, checked the aggressive activities of France and her British backers?

Mention should, in the first place, be made of the broad masses of the British people, of whose indirect intervention I have spoken above, and whose attitude I have, moreover, already described in paragraph 1 of my report A 999 of the 10th of this month.<sup>11</sup> It is, therefore, sufficient to say here that that sense of justice and decency with which the British people are so often credited, which certainly goes astray on occasions but which undoubtedly exists, has fully stood the test in the present case. Just as, in the case of Abyssinia, the people unanimously took sides, in an upsurge of elementary emotion, *with* the State attacked and *against* Italy, and with their native obstinacy brought about the fall of the Foreign Secretary, Sir Samuel Hoare, when he tried to make peace, so now, undisturbed by their familiar innate antipathy to the new and, to them, alien form of government in Germany, they have spontaneously recognized Germany's moral justification and have therefore rejected the French methods of denying justice and the French presumptuousness. Even if this reaction were not evident among the people themselves, it could be shown to exist from the numerous letters I have received during the last few days from persons in all walks of life, in which this attitude is expressed again and again. Besides this sense of justice, which this time exerted its influence in our favour, this reaction on the part of the British people stems, in the last analysis, from the sneaking regard for the German people which has always existed in the subconscious mind of the broad masses and which neither war nor all the manœuvres aimed at denigrating the new German Reich have ever been able wholly to eradicate. Though otherwise seldom apparent, these factors have, in the hour of danger, helped to create among the mass of the British people an important element of support for the German people when exercising their natural rights, which should still be effective when it comes to getting through the second phase of the crisis, of which the disgraceful effort produced by the rump committee of the Locarno Powers is the characteristic feature.

Next as a factor in preventing war there should, above all, be mentioned the wise and noble ruler of the British Empire, who has steadfastly adhered to the principle that the German proposals are suited to form the basis of a new system of peace in Europe and that in no circumstances must developments of a serious nature be allowed to arise from the difficulties of the moment.

Worthy of particular mention, too, is the attitude of the City which,

<sup>11</sup> Document No. 66.



in spite of Jewish influences, has been firmly opposed to warmongering, although in this, of course, business interests may well have played a substantial part.

Finally, those must not be forgotten who have risked their own skins by personally supporting Germany in public. First and foremost there is Lord Londonderry<sup>12</sup> who, although he incurred strong criticism in Parliament and in certain quarters in London on account of his thoroughly pro-German letter, which was printed in a prominent position in *The Times* of March 12, nevertheless evoked a wide response throughout the country. Mention should further again be made of our old friends, General Sir Ian Hamilton<sup>13</sup> and Colonel Moore,<sup>14</sup> who also supported the German point of view with good effect in the press; also of Lloyd George,<sup>15</sup> for championing Germany by the spoken and written word, Lord Snowden<sup>16</sup> for his article on the wrong done to Germany, Lord Lothian<sup>17</sup> and many others. Mention should be made, too, of the Anglo-German Fellowship, which achieved a great success on March 18 with a banquet in honour of the German banker Fischer<sup>18</sup> presided over by Mr. Tiarks,<sup>19</sup> at which I myself was present and which was attended by twice as many British guests as had originally accepted.

It would not be in keeping with the nature of this despatch, which is purely a review in retrospect of a brief and troubled period of history, to include in it any forecast of future developments. Therefore, from the events described above, one brief conclusion only should be drawn, namely that if Germany continues to pursue her policy of peace, it will by no means be easy for any British Government to pursue a foreign policy based in the main on a military alliance directed against Germany.

V. HOESCH

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<sup>12</sup> Charles, 7th Marquess of Londonderry, Secretary of State for Air, 1931-1935. The Embassy in London reported on Londonderry's letter to *The Times* in despatch A 1088 of Mar. 12 (6710/E506804-05).

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 66 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>14</sup> See document No. 66 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>15</sup> David Lloyd George, British Liberal M.P., Prime Minister 1916-1922.

<sup>16</sup> Philip, Viscount Snowden, former Labour Chancellor of the Exchequer; later 1931-1932 National Labour Lord Privy Seal.

<sup>17</sup> See document No. 74, footnote 1.

<sup>18</sup> Dr. Otto C. Fischer, Head of the Hauptgruppe 10 (Banken und Kredit) der Gesamtorganisation der Wirtschaft.

<sup>19</sup> F. C. Tiarks, banker, of J. Henry Schroder & Co., and a Director of the Bank of England.

## No. 179

6710/E507876

*The Acting Head of the German Delegation in London to the  
Foreign Ministry*

Telegram \*

URGENT

Del. No. 4 of March 22

LONDON, March 22, 1936—1:43 p.m.

Received March 22—4:00 p.m.

II R 680.

The Danish and Spanish representatives on the [League] Council and the representatives here of Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland, meeting under the chairmanship of the Danish Foreign Minister, Munch, yesterday discussed the attitude to be adopted in the Council during the deliberations on the Locarno Powers' proposal[s]. From what I have been able to learn so far, it would appear to be the unanimous view of the above-mentioned States that:

1) The procedure employed by the Locarno Powers in submitting the proposals to the Council was not consistent with the dignity and independence of the States represented on the Council;

2) In the case at issue the Council should not be allowed to become the tool of the Locarno Powers;

3) That it was in any case quite out of the question for the Powers represented on the Council even to take note of the General Staff conversations which were included in the proposals, since these were contrary to the spirit of the League of Nations and the procedure under Article 11 did not provide for such measures.

I will try and obtain further information.

As Finland took part too, I suggest that your telegram II R 657<sup>1</sup> be sent to Helsinki as well.<sup>2</sup>

Please inform Ribbentrop.<sup>3</sup>

DIECKHOFF<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> i.e., document No. 176; for its transmission to London see footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "The telegram was repeated to Helsinki yesterday, R[enthe]-F[ink], Mar. 23." The text of document No. 176 and of the document here printed less the last three sentences were transmitted to the Legation in Helsinki by telegram No. 7 of Mar. 22; the text of document No. 176 was also transmitted by telegram of Mar. 22 to the Legations in Brussels, Dublin and Cape Town and to the Consulate General at Montreal (6710/E507877-79).

<sup>3</sup> Ribbentrop had left London for Germany by air on Mar. 21 to report to his Government. No record of his consultations has been found.

<sup>4</sup> The document here printed was repeated by telegram of Mar. 23 to the Missions in Copenhagen, Madrid, Stockholm, Oslo, The Hague, Berne (No. 39), Lisbon, Buenos Aires (No. 39), Santiago de Chile and Quito, and to the Consulate at Geneva (6710/E507881).

## No. 180

6710/E507882

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 162 of March 22

PARIS, March 22, 1936—[6:00 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 22—7:00 p.m.

II R 681.

With reference to your telegram No. 149.<sup>2</sup>

Cerruti's attitude in Paris appears to me to be inconsistent with the language held by Suvich with our Ambassador.<sup>3</sup>

I have the impression that Cerruti is proclaiming his hostility to the Third Reich with increased emphasis here and that he is hinting both to the French Government and, through the familiar channels (the press, war veterans, members of Parliament etc.), to the French public, that Italy might swing more and more towards the French front if France would support Italy on the question of the lifting of sanctions.

I discern repercussions not only in the French press and in other public pronouncements, which, since March 7, are increasingly in favour of the lifting of sanctions and are counting upon Italian support against Germany, but also in Flandin's statement in the Chamber,<sup>4</sup> where he spoke, in markedly optimistic terms, of the prospect of re-establishing the Stresa front. That passage in the statement, in which Flandin said he had already succeeded in Geneva in initiating negotiations for putting an end to hostilities and lifting sanctions, and which had later to be modified (see my telegram No. 161),<sup>5</sup> is in my opinion significant for the trend which the discussions between Flandin and Cerruti are taking.<sup>6</sup>

FORSTER

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris draft (M287/M012038).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 164, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 164.

<sup>4</sup> For the text of Flandin's statement of Mar. 20 see *Journal Officiel de la République Française, Débats Parlementaires, Chambre des Députés*, 1936, pp. 1063-1065.

<sup>5</sup> Of Mar. 21, not printed (8609/E603913/A-914).

<sup>6</sup> The text of the document here printed was repeated to the Embassy in Rome as telegram No. 62 of Mar. 23 (6710/E507883).

## No. 181

6710/E508024

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Ecuador to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram •

URGENT

No. 12 of March 22

QUITO, March 22, 1936—8:45 p.m.

Received March 23—5:55 p.m.

II R 718.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 15<sup>1</sup> and 16.<sup>2</sup>

In accordance with instructions, I have expressed our satisfaction over Ecuador's attitude to the Foreign Minister<sup>3</sup> and, at an audience today, to the Head of State<sup>4</sup> too, while at the same time making use of the observations contained in telegram No. 15.

Both informed me that Ecuador would continue to refrain from adopting any position in acute issues, and particularly in any question involving possible sanctions, which they described as nonsensical. The [Ecuador] representative on the Council<sup>5</sup> had in consequence repeatedly received strict instructions to keep away from London for the time being, and, in order that he might have a diplomatic excuse, he had been sent to Madrid to settle some old foreign trade debts. The Head of State gave me to understand that he intended to recall Zaldumbide should he fail to carry out these instructions. In this connection the Head of State also hinted that the Government here were considering an early withdrawal from the League of Nations, which, in his opinion, was a tool of the Versailles Treaty and, as such, could not possibly further the cause of true world peace; moreover, it was of no importance as far as the vital interests of the South American States were concerned. The Foreign Minister again spoke of the friendly relations with Germany which were a contributory factor in deciding Ecuador's attitude.

DRECHSLER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 176.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 159, footnote 6.

<sup>3</sup> General Angel Isaac Chiriboga.

<sup>4</sup> Federico Páez.

<sup>5</sup> Gonzalo Zaldumbide.



## No. 182

63/43964-68

*Unsigned Memorandum*FOREIGN MINISTRY DRAFT OF MARCH 22, 1936<sup>1</sup>

The proposals agreed by the representatives of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Italy<sup>2</sup> contain the following demands upon Germany:

1) The German Government are to submit to the International Court at The Hague the claim put forward by them that the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance is incompatible with the Rhine Pact of Locarno, and the right, which they deduce from this assertion, to restore German sovereignty in the Rhineland zone. They are to undertake to accept as final the decision of this tribunal.

This means that a committee of jurists is to decide on a problem of the most far-reaching political and military significance and that on this formal decision should depend Germany's vital interest of being able to defend her own national territory against a more powerful coalition of highly armed States. In addition to this, the juridical tribunal set up by the League of Nations is to speak after the highest political tribunal of the League of Nations, namely the Council, has, by its resolution of March 19 of this year,<sup>3</sup> already committed itself to a position which is *ipso facto* contrary to the German view.

2) For an indefinite period of time, dependent in practice on the whim of the other Powers, Germany is to undertake not to reinforce the troops stationed in the Rhineland, to maintain the formations of the SA, SS and even of the Labour Service which are already in the Rhineland, and which are in no way military in character, at their exact strength as on March 7 of this year, to construct no fortifications or groundworks of any sort, and to lay out or expand no airfields. In return, the sole obligation to be undertaken by France and Belgium is that the troops of these two countries which are already stationed in the frontier zone and which are known to be exceptionally numerous, should not be further reinforced by the despatch of more troops.

3) For the same, indefinite, period German territory bordering on the frontier with France and Belgium is to be cleared of German troops to a depth of 20 kilometres and occupied by British and Italian troops. By this infringement of German sovereignty, which is to be undertaken six years after the final liberation of the Rhineland from the troops of the

<sup>1</sup> This heading is handwritten. See also documents Nos. 176 and 183; copies of an earlier draft, dated Mar. 20, have been filmed as 63/43918-23 and 5727/E415168-74.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 203.

victorious Powers,<sup>4</sup> it is apparently intended to create the impression, completely unjustified and totally contrary to all the facts, that the possibility of a German attack is to be reckoned with. This unreasonable demand on Germany is not set off in any way by obligations to be undertaken by France and Belgium.

4) The whole Rhineland is to be placed under the supervision of an international Control Commission. Even if this Control Commission were also to supervise the above-mentioned obligation on France and Belgium not further to reinforce their troops on the frontier, the principle of reciprocity would not, in view of the great disparity in the obligations to be applied to either side and which are to be thus supervised, be even remotely observed on this point.

5) The proposed negotiations on securing peace in the West will be most gravely prejudiced by the agreements already reached between the four Governments responsible for the document of March 19.

It is, for one thing, clear that it is intended not to make the security treaties proposed by Germany for the West applicable (as was, of course, a prerequisite under the German proposals) to all contracting parties on terms of parity, but to provide for special commitments directed against Germany, between the four Powers.

Moreover, the document proclaims the four Powers' intention, even after the end of the proposed interim régime, to limit German sovereignty over German national territory on the western frontiers by forbidding the construction of fortifications. That, in the document, this intention is not specifically confined to German sovereign territory, but, instead mention is merely made in general terms of a zone yet to be fixed, is pure camouflage. For, since the prohibition is to apply only to the construction of new fortifications, and since France already possesses a mighty system of fortifications on her eastern frontier, there is no room for doubt as to the completely one-sided nature of the agreement. No grounds are given for such limitation of Germany's means of defence.

6) The political character of the above-mentioned demands by the four Powers is clear from the fact that they were accompanied by a request to the Council of the League that, in a solemn resolution, Germany be publicly defamed. Thus, by a procedure identical with that which the four Powers previously employed after the Stresa Conference, the Council is again to be enlisted for the furtherance of these Powers' own special political purposes.

7) The German Government are to be put under particular political pressure, in that they are notified of the measures which it is proposed to take against Germany in the event of her non-acceptance of the demands of the four Powers. These demands consequently assume the character of an ultimatum.

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<sup>4</sup> Allied occupation of the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland was finally terminated on June 30, 1930.

Such a document is not a basis for negotiations. It ignores the most elementary principles of reciprocity, of equality of rights and respect for the sovereignty of an honour-loving people. Germany will never accept an infringement of these principles.<sup>5</sup> No lasting peace structure can be built on demands which, in accordance with the methods of the Treaty of Versailles, are dictated by the intention of discriminating against and defaming one country. The sad history of the post-war years has given ample proof of this. If it is wished to safeguard peace between Germany and her western neighbours, the solution of this task should not be begun with the establishment of a frontier régime which must act like a permanent wound on the European body politic.

In view of the attitude of the four Powers which emerges from the document of March 19, the German Government consider that direct negotiations with them at present offer no prospects of success. But in order to demonstrate their determination for their part to leave nothing untried which might open a way out of the situation and which might remove the tension weighing on Europe, the German Government propose that the other Governments consider the adoption together with the German Government of the following procedure:

The five Governments should appeal to a tribunal which, in the present circumstances, could claim for itself the highest conceivable degree of authority and impartiality. With this aim in view they are to request the Heads of State of five countries not involved in the matter to make a joint proposal for the peaceful settlement of the situation created by the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance and the consequent restoration of German sovereignty in the Rhineland zone. Of the five Heads of State, two would be chosen by the German Government, two by the French and Belgian Governments and the fifth by the British and Italian Governments.

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<sup>5</sup> This sentence is an insertion in Renthe-Fink's handwriting.

## No. 183

3242/712523-24

*The Foreign Ministry to Brigadeführer Schaub<sup>1</sup> (Reich Chancellery)  
and to Ambassador Ribbentrop<sup>2</sup>*

BERLIN, March 22, 1936.

Enclosed is the draft of a reply to the Locarno Powers about the document communicated to us.<sup>3</sup> Paragraphs 1-7 have been couched in sharp juridical terms and deliberately kept short.

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<sup>1</sup> Julius Schaub, one of Hitler's adjutants.

<sup>2</sup> This letter, which is taken from the Foreign Minister's files, is unsigned.

<sup>3</sup> The enclosure was not found with the document here printed; it would appear to have been identical with the Foreign Ministry draft printed as document No. 182 above.



This reply ought, if possible, to be handed over in London tomorrow evening, so that it is made known before the foreign policy debate in the House of Commons scheduled for Tuesday.<sup>4</sup>

Page 5 of the enclosure contains the proposal already mentioned by me in conversation yesterday. It is very doubtful whether the Locarno Powers, especially France, will accept the proposal at all. If, however, it is made by us, nothing must become known about our intention beforehand, so as to prevent the proposal from being decried in the press beforehand.

Of the Heads of State the following are excluded: Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Russia, Czechoslovakia, Germany.

Possible German candidates would be: Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland, Finland.

Possible candidates for the other side: the United States of North America, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, Rumania, Norway, Turkey, Argentina, Portugal.

The German viewpoint could then most usefully be further explained in detail at the Council session.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Mar. 24; for the communication actually made in London that day see document No. 207.

<sup>5</sup> An undated note in Bülow's handwriting (3242/712522) reads: "*Excluded* are the Heads of State of Britain, France, Belgium, Italy, Germany, Russia, Czechoslovakia. *Possible German candidates*: Hungary, Sweden, Switzerland. [In Neurath's handwriting: "Finland."] *Possible candidates for the other side*: The United States of America, Switzerland, Yugoslavia, (Rumania), Norway, (Turkey), (Argentina), (Portugal). (Council Powers could be rejected.)"

## No. 184

6710/E507968-69

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 22, 1936.

RM 253.

II R 702.

I asked the Italian Ambassador to come and see me today in order to confirm once more that we would reject in their entirety the proposals contained in the Memorandum of the Locarno Powers.<sup>1</sup> When he asked me whether we would content ourselves with a flat rejection or whether we intended to put forward any counter-proposals, I told him that we were still considering this. We would first of all press for the Council meeting fixed for tomorrow afternoon to be postponed until Wednesday<sup>2</sup> at least, as we must have time for our deliberations. Should there be question of any counter-proposals,

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 25.



then it would at most be a matter of raising a question of procedure for the purpose of preventing, in accordance with the frequently expressed wishes of the British, the threads of the negotiations from being broken off completely. There should, however, be no doubt at all that we would reject the proposals themselves.

I further told the Ambassador that I was not quite clear about the attitude adopted by Ambassador Grandi in London during the deliberations on that part of the Memorandum which related to the Locarno Powers themselves. Signor Attolico replied that Grandi, in accordance with his instructions, had taken part in the technical work on the details of this document, but had most expressly reserved his Government's views on the document as a whole as well as on its details.

In conclusion the Ambassador again assured me that Mussolini himself had confirmed to him that he was only waiting for a clear statement of our views on the Memorandum in order, for his part, too, to state that the proposals set forth therein were unacceptable.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

## No. 185

63/43952-56

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

ROME, March 23, 1936—12:05 a.m.

No. 41 of March 21 [*sic*]<sup>1</sup>

Received March 23—3:00 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 61 of [March] 21.<sup>2</sup>

[1] Today, immediately before Mussolini's second conversation with Kánya and Gömbös, I had the opportunity of setting forth the German point of view to both the latter. I told them that we did not, for the time being, wish to allow the threads to be severed, but that we were unable to accept most of the demands. The whole document<sup>3</sup> was unsuited to form a basis for discussion. Three points, moreover (The Hague, foreign troops and the Control Commission), were completely unacceptable. In view of what Gömbös had described to me in numerous conversations as Hungary's aim, namely, the restoration of trustful cooperation between Berlin and Rome, the decisive moment had now come: it was now for Mussolini, for his part, plainly to reject the above-mentioned three points in London as being impossible. Just as we did not deny that the Abyssinian enterprise had afforded us

<sup>1</sup> The Rome draft (M286/M011845-48) has "No. 41 of March 22, 1936".

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 177.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19, see Editors' Note, p. 208.

a certain measure of relief, so Mussolini should now take into account the fact of our neutrality, which was of great advantage to him, and the present diversionary offensive.

Gömbös replied that the significance of this decision was perfectly clear to him; he had already done some preliminary work yesterday and had, indeed, found Mussolini favourably disposed towards Germany. Kánya added that, originally, annoyance at German willingness [to rejoin] the League of Nations had been very great. Now, however, he was glad to note that the atmosphere had improved. Gömbös thought that all the preconditions now obtained for achieving really far-reaching and lasting cooperation.

I drew attention to the difficulty arising from the fact that France was our most bitter opponent while Britain was showing more sympathy towards us; on the other hand, Britain was Italy's declared opponent and France the country upon whose help Italy was relying for the abolition of sanctions.

Kánya thought that there was, however, now a good deal of disappointment with France, whilst we, too, doubtless had reason to be disappointed with Britain. Gömbös said that we ought frankly to discuss these points of view amongst ourselves and could then assuredly manage to find a way of solving the Rhineland problem for Germany and the Abyssinian problem for Italy. Kánya added that it would be important to relieve Mussolini of his anxiety lest, the Rhineland question once settled, Britain adopt an intransigent attitude towards Italy on the Abyssinian question.

I replied that I was certainly not in a position to do this, though I felt unable to believe that anything of the sort would occur; I could merely give an assurance that we at least would not pursue an anti-Italian policy.

In conclusion, Gömbös said that, in his ensuing conversation with Mussolini, he would try to exert influence in the sense of our conversation.

2. Mussolini, who had been engaged all day with Austria and Hungary, received me at about six o'clock this evening. I made statements similar to those I had made to Gömbös and Kánya, stressed the Führer's special instructions and his basic principle of not in any circumstances being party to a policy hostile to Italy, and suggested, as instructed, that Italy should adopt an unfavourable attitude towards the three points. Mussolini first expressed satisfaction concerning our consultations, about the expedience of which he had recently given instructions to Attolico too; successful cooperation was not possible unless there took place a timely exchange of views. I replied that my *démarche* today was entirely in the sense of the suggestion made by Attolico.<sup>4</sup> Mussolini then commented on the situation: The course

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 174.

of events had again shown that France and Britain could not really be separated. In this respect the Naval Agreement,<sup>5</sup> which in itself was valuable to us, had perhaps given rise to illusions in certain quarters in my country. He did not think that we had at present any cause to worry unduly about the effects of our action. Britain would, however, rearm to an unprecedented extent and, supported by France, would set up a *Pax Britannica* in Europe. The only country which might spoil this game was Japan. He saw no signs as yet of any relaxation of Britain's uncompromising attitude with regard to Abyssinia; there remained therefore no alternative but to create a military *fait accompli* and then to try and settle matters with the Negus alone, who was primarily concerned about his throne, his entourage, safety and his civil list.<sup>6</sup>

With regard to the Rhineland question he declared that our attitude was justified in principle. Should we wish to break off [negotiations], he would quite understand; should we wish to negotiate, he would instruct Grandi accordingly. He wished to reaffirm explicitly that Grandi had collaborated only technically and whilst strictly maintaining every reservation. He, Mussolini, would transmit the Italian point of view to London.<sup>7</sup> On the basis of my exposition, he discussed with me a number of drafts which he had before him, each of which not only emphasized Italy's well-known reservations but also strongly dissociated Italy from the whole document. In doing so, he stated that the version which he would choose would in any case accord with the Führer's wishes. For he would attempt [*sic*]<sup>8</sup> that Italy would not agree to any measures which were of a coercive or exceptional nature (*coercitive o eccezionali*). I replied that this phrasing would indeed cover foreign troops and the Control Commission, but not the question of the tribunal. At first he maintained that it did, but he abandoned this view in the course of the conversation. As he said that he shared our point of view (that the question had been prejudiced and was not a purely juridical one), I suggested that he should find some means of giving expression to this, whereupon he promised to instruct Grandi accordingly, just as he intended, in any case, to direct him to support us on these three points. In any case, therefore, he would formulate his reply in such a way as to make it quite clear that he was opposed to any measures of a coercive or exceptional nature. Moreover, he had the gravest misgivings about the remaining contents of the Memorandum too, which he described as a veritable sea of complicated

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<sup>5</sup> i.e., the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 156.

<sup>6</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 1 above) here reads: "... his throne, his personal safety and his civil list."

<sup>7</sup> In the Rome draft (see footnote 1 above) this sentence reads: "He, Mussolini, would now transmit the Italian point of view to London tomorrow."

<sup>8</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 1 above) here reads: "For he would stress that ..."

proposals, which were obviously designed to drown any reasonable and practical suggestions. Furthermore, there was a snake in the grass lurking everywhere.

I then took the opportunity of explaining our whole attitude, in accordance with your telegram No. 59 of March 21,<sup>9</sup> to which he listened with approving comments. In conclusion I once more went over with him the position he would take up in his reply to London and again suggested to him that instructions be sent to Grandi about the Hague Court of Arbitration, which he promised to do.

HASSELL

<sup>9</sup> Document No. 176.

## No. 186

6710/E507970

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 23, 1936.

RM 255.

II R 703.

The British Ambassador telephoned me yesterday evening to enquire when Herr von Ribbentrop might be expected to return to London<sup>1</sup> and when we would furnish our reply to the proposals of the Locarno Powers.<sup>2</sup>

I replied that we were at present still engaged in examining the matter. As soon as this had been concluded, Herr von Ribbentrop would return to London, but probably not before Tuesday.<sup>3</sup>

The Ambassador then began once again, on instructions from Eden, urgently to request that we should not simply reject the proposals made to us, but should in our turn make counter-proposals and a "gesture". I then told him that we had already made our proposals<sup>4</sup> and that, in spite of all efforts, no new ones had suggested themselves to us. We were, however, still deliberating. I could, however, definitely tell him now that we should in any case reject the so-called proposals contained in the Locarno Powers' document.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 179, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Mar. 24.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., the proposals contained in the German Memorandum of Mar. 7; see document No. 3, enclosure.



## No. 187

6710/E507957-58

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 163 of March 23

PARIS, March 23, 1936—[8:55 a.m.]<sup>1</sup>

Received March 23—10:00 a.m.

II R 698.

From a well-informed source I have received the following picture of the current situation:

In London Flandin had been faced with the necessity of having to take home with him a quick initial success, since the Government could not afford to send the Chamber out into an election empty-handed. Having gained this objective, the Cabinet felt freer, at least regarding the tempo of further developments, since the elections would to some extent divert public attention from foreign to domestic affairs. This would afford time for a period of diplomatic negotiations behind the scenes. A necessary condition for this was, admittedly, that Germany should not reject the Locarno Powers' proposals wholesale. There was no doubt that Germany could not accept certain conditions, such as the occupation of German territory by foreign troops. To reject others, particularly the appeal to the Hague Court, would be difficult for Germany, since arbitration was closely connected with the idea of international tranquillization. If Germany did not adopt a purely negative attitude, there were prospects that those conditions which were humiliating for Germany would be replaced by others by means of negotiation.

My informant expressed the opinion that van Zeeland would be a suitable person to act as intermediary. In support of his opinion he said he thought that the British, to whom the idea of the 20 km. zone was particularly distasteful, would be able to exert less influence in France, because the French still distrusted them and might easily repeat the charge that Britain, in spite of her obligations, wanted to abandon her position as guarantor and to revert to the rôle of arbiter between Germany and France. France's attitude towards Belgium did not involve such misgivings. The Belgian representative was, therefore, all the more competent to mediate because, by the discretion of his behaviour hitherto, he had won great respect, not only internationally but in France as well.

This account of my informant's statements is for your information.

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris Embassy draft (6403/E474997-5000).

Although I would make certain reservations regarding the readiness of the French Government to negotiate as expected by him, it appears to me to be correct that Belgian mediation would fall on more fruitful ground here than British.

FORSTER

## No. 188

3242/712495-96

### *The Acting Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram<sup>1</sup>

German Delegation No. 5

LONDON, March 23, 1936—10:50 a.m.

[II R 704.]<sup>2</sup>

For the Foreign Minister and for Ambassador von Ribbentrop.

The conviction is growing in all circles here that it will be quite impossible to create a zone occupied by foreign troops on German territory only. On the other hand, even our friends here revert constantly to the fact that some willingness to make concessions must be displayed on our side. The following suggestion by Lord Mottistone<sup>3</sup> has, among others, been brought to our notice in this connection: Germany should make the counter-proposal that the British and Italian Military Attachés in Berlin should tour the Rhineland and ascertain the non-aggressive nature of the German troops. A counter-proposal of this kind, which could perhaps be modified to the effect that, instead of the British and Italian Military Attachés, British and Italian General Staff officers should be invited to tour the Rhineland or, alternatively, to remain in the Rhineland for the duration of the negotiations, would, in the view of our friends, have a good effect here and would, in any case, give the British something to chew on. The proposal might well be supplemented by the suggestion that British and Italian officers should make similar investigations on the French and Belgian side of the frontier while the negotiations are in train.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> Transmitted by telephone; a note on the draft in the Delegation's files (6432/E480483-84) reads: "Dictated on the telephone to M[inisterial] D[irektor] Gaus, 9:45 a.m."

<sup>2</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E507972-73).

<sup>3</sup> Major General Lord Mottistone, former British Liberal M.P. (as J. E. B. Seely) and Secretary of State for War, 1912-1914.

## No. 189

769/270906-09

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the  
Wehrmacht to the Foreign Ministry*

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET

BERLIN, March 23, 1936.  
II M 988 g.

For the attention of Geheimrat v. Renthe-Fink.

I enclose herewith data on the armed forces on the German and French sides, together with a map of the area.<sup>1</sup> The data are accompanied by a few comments. The Reich War Minister would be grateful if these data could be submitted this morning to the Foreign Minister.<sup>2</sup>

Ambassador v. Ribbentrop has received the same data.

By order:  
FRISIUS

[Enclosure]

SECRET  
L I a

BERLIN, March 22, 1936.

*Military points for the German reply*

(1) *The numerical inferiority of the German forces.*

The grand total of troops which have been moved into the former demilitarized zone amounts to about 22,000 men (36,000 including police).

The troops being held in readiness by France amount, as far as can be computed here, to at least 200,000 men.

(2) *Higher degree of preparedness of the French troops.*

The mass of the French forces is considerably nearer to the frontier than is that of the German troops (see map<sup>1</sup> for the distribution of French and German forces on the frontier).

The French forces have reached a more advanced stage of mobilization. They already have at their disposal requisitioned transport etc., and are nearer to their mobilization areas than are the German troops, who have their peace-time equipment and have moved further away from their mobilization areas.

(3) *Defensive character of the German forces.*

The German forces which have been moved into the former demilitarized zone are in no way offensive in character.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (M207/M006600-05).

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Has been submitted to the Foreign Minister, Ko[tze], [Mar.] 23."

*None* of the following have been moved in:  
 motorized reconnaissance units,  
 motorized infantry,  
 armoured fighting vehicles,  
 armoured divisional staffs,  
 cavalry reconnaissance regiments,  
 bomber aircraft,  
 not even reconnaissance aircraft.

The forces alerted on the French side are, on the other hand, clearly offensive in character.

They have for the most part alerted:  
 the mobile portions of the Army, e.g.:  
 the light mechanized division,  
 cavalry divisions,  
 nearly half of all the peace-time tank battalions,<sup>3</sup>  
 lorried infantry,  
 self-propelled guns,  
 heavy artillery, etc.

#### (4) *Construction of Fortifications.*

Any fortifications constructed on the German side are certainly not in any way offensive in character.

France could never, therefore, feel herself threatened by them.

France, however, objects to them on the following grounds:

(a) The whole of the French Army organization and the plan of deployment against Germany are based on the assumption that a demilitarized zone exists, namely:

Light mobile troops in large numbers are at once to be pushed through the *demilitarized zone* to the Rhine and

Under cover of these forces, the main body of the French army is to advance into Germany.

Once German fortifications have been constructed, this will no longer be feasible:

The light mobile forces will no longer be of use to France.

French deployment must take place behind the French fortifications.

(b) The French alliance is no longer of such value to Russia if Germany possesses fortifications on her Western frontier. For, in the event of a Russo-German conflict, France will no longer be able without further ado to advance into Germany, at least up to the Rhine.

#### (5) *The creation of a neutral 20 km. zone on German territory.*

This would be as incompatible with German as with French honour, and is therefore out of the question.

Ten towns already garrisoned would be affected (Aachen, Trier(?),<sup>4</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "In the meantime still more. W. Sch[mieden], Mar. 30."

<sup>4</sup> Thus in the original.



Saarbrücken, Karlsruhe, Durlach, Ettlingen, Rastatt, Offenburg, Freiburg, Lörrach), comprising (inclusive of former police) 13 battalions and four artillery units, in all, some 14,000 men.

## No. 190

6710/E508019

*The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 9 of March 23

THE HAGUE, March 23, 1936—2:23 p.m.

Received March 23—4:00 p.m.

II R 714.

With reference to your telegram No. 34 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

I spoke in the sense of the above-mentioned telegram today to the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> who showed much understanding of our point of view. He intends to inform the Netherlands Minister in London,<sup>3</sup> who is to confer this afternoon with representatives of other neutrals, and particularly to emphasize that in the Dutch view the question is not, at the present juncture, one that should be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations, but rather one which must be solved by the signatories to the Locarno Treaty alone.

ZECH

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 176.

<sup>2</sup> Jonkheer A. C. D. de Graeff.

<sup>3</sup> Jonkheer R. de Marees van Swinderen.

## No. 191

6710/E508032

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Sweden to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 32 of March 23

STOCKHOLM, March 23, 1936—7:45 p.m.

Received March 23—10:00 p.m.

II R 721.

With reference to my telegram No. 31 of March 20.<sup>1</sup>

I took advantage of my today's visit to the Cabinet Secretary (State Secretary Günther),<sup>2</sup> to set out in detail the views expressed in your telegrams Nos. 20<sup>3</sup> and 22<sup>4</sup> of March 21 concerning the London Locarno

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 166.

<sup>2</sup> Christian E. Günther, Secretary General of the Swedish Foreign Ministry.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 176.

<sup>4</sup> Telegram No. 22 was in fact dated Mar. 22 (6710/E507869); it repeated to Stockholm the text of Rome telegram No. 39 of Mar. 21 (see document No. 170, footnote 3).

resolutions. The Cabinet Secretary evinced sympathy, but said that he did not quite understand why Germany was unwilling to agree to having the Soviet-French Pact submitted to the purely legal procedure of the Hague Court of Arbitration, whose impartiality could be taken for granted. Political and military aspects did not, of course, come within the competence of the Hague [Court]. Furthermore, the Locarno Powers' Memorandum of March 19, which, in his opinion had been very cautiously drafted, contained certain obscurities. The proposed foreign occupation of a 20 km. zone scarcely seemed practicable in view of the general political situation. The participation of Scandinavian troops could not be seriously contemplated. The Cabinet Secretary repeated that in Sweden's view no demands for sanctions in the present case could be based on the League of Nations in its present form (see report A 299 of March 18).<sup>5</sup> Today's Reuter report that the neutral countries would not agree to any Council resolution advocating more comprehensive measures, but only to a declaration condemning the breach of treaty and an exhortation to the members of the League of Nations to honour treaties, the Cabinet Secretary described as being, where Sweden was concerned, a true reflection of feeling here. He personally believed that the British Government would do their utmost to prevent a completely negative German reply, but that, on the other hand, they were not expecting that Germany would accept the Locarno Powers' Memorandum in its present form. The Swedish Government would be considering the international situation today and tomorrow.

MEYNEN

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<sup>5</sup> Not printed (6710/E507838). In this Meynen reported that Foreign Minister Sandler had told the Chairman of the Swedish-German Union, Lieut.-Gen. Henry de Champs, that a close study of the League Covenant and of the Locarno Treaty must lead to the conclusion that the application of any sanctions whatsoever against Germany as a result of Germany's reoccupation of the Rhineland could not arise at all.

## No. 192

4620/E200207-10

*State Secretary Bülow to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 23, 1936.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: It would have been very nice if you could have accompanied Ribbentrop, for there was much to discuss. But naturally I fully understand that it was essential to leave you in London, and the course of events has confirmed this. Part of what I would have liked to discuss with you I will incorporate in this letter.

The reports of the Delegation on events in London have been excellent in quality but inadequate in quantity. This may well be due in

part to the fact that some members of the Delegation are lacking in experience of conferences. To give an illustration: Telegram No. 3<sup>1</sup> gives only a very inadequate account of the course of the secret session of the Council. The press keeps us informed about the public sessions; it is for the Delegation to do so about secret sessions, which naturally does not exclude the Delegation's supplying supplementary reports on the public sessions. We should much have liked to know more clearly what Grandi said, for we are in daily negotiation with the Italians with regard to their attitude, and we must be in a position to check on all they are doing. Further, we should have much liked to know exactly what Beck said. Ribbentrop told us something about this orally, but he misunderstood the true state of affairs, as he had not understood that from the very beginning Poland was an opponent of the (old) Locarno Pact. In the past we have always had the technical arrangement that one member of the Delegation should draft an informatory telegram to Berlin even during the session, constantly incorporating all relevant material in this telegram. I have, also as leader of a delegation, mostly done this myself. For the rest I should recommend Schmieden or Woermann because of their League of Nations experience. If the telegram became too lengthy, or if it was possible to summarize the views of some of the members of the Council, this could be done later. In this way a tremendous amount of time can be saved. I can well imagine that the question of centralizing the reporting, which is, of course, necessary, may lead to the leader of the Delegation, who cannot always be reached, being unwilling to let any telegrams go out without his signature. In this case you could manage by letting Schmieden send telegrams to the official responsible for League of Nations affairs, or Wingen<sup>2</sup> can send telegrams to Aschmann for the information of the press after consultation with me. In many cases it would, indeed, suffice if we were to receive by airmail a minute or a memorandum dealing with the various events of the day. In any case I would be grateful if you would ensure that we received more comprehensive reporting; it is, of course, by no means necessary that you write all the drafts yourself.

Reporting by telephone has great disadvantages, except perhaps in the case of telephoning through a prepared text. You can never depend upon the Foreign Minister, or one of us here to whom you have told something, drawing up a memorandum in sufficient detail (if, indeed, at all) to ensure that all those concerned here, and they amount to quite a large number nowadays, are sufficiently well informed. Apart from that, the Führer and Chancellor has now forbidden the use of the

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 168, footnote 4.

<sup>2</sup> Counsellor Oskar Wingen, of the Economic Department of the Foreign Ministry, was a member of the German Delegation in London; he had previously served in the Press Department.

telephone for the exchange of views with London (except in the case of an apparatus fitted with a scrambler), because he had the impression that in this way the British were finding out far too much about our tactical intentions.

The transmission of the Anglo-French Memorandum<sup>3</sup> went off particularly unfortunately. You have spoken very bitterly, and also very unjustly, about Department I in this connection. If you had let us know in good time, i.e., before 9 o'clock, that something more was to come and that you required someone here to receive it, we could quite easily have made the necessary arrangements. But even so you need not have spent many hours of the night transmitting to Prüfer, who cannot do shorthand, and to a lady who has not yet passed her English interpreter's examination, a text full of typing and other mistakes. The Language Section was on duty all night or at work till the early hours of the morning on account of other matters, and it would have been able to cope with the business quickly and without any trouble. Apart from this, we have here a machine into which things of this sort can be dictated by telephone. In this particular case, however, the best medium, I think, would have been a telegram *en clair*. That the document was secret is of no importance. Responsibility for ensuring the secrecy of telegrams in London rests with the British. In similar cases in the past we have always sent telegrams *en clair* without hesitation whenever the text was of foreign origin. Please do not forget either that for telegrams we have a special and very efficient system for duplication and distribution, whereas in the case of telephone messages and the like all has to be improvised.

Finally, on Friday evening<sup>4</sup> Ribbentrop telephoned to the Führer and Chancellor to complain about the attitude of our press, which, he said, was not giving him sufficient support. Already on the day you left here I had told the press that their primary task was to lend support to Ribbentrop in London. But the press comments, about which Ribbentrop complained, and with reason, all came from London. Not a single German newspaper has of its own accord adopted too weak a tone with regard to the unreasonable demands contained in the Memorandum. The majority of the London correspondents, however, following the inspired British pattern, painted the contents of the Memorandum, which were then still unknown, in rosy colours. Most of these reports we suppressed here. The mistake, if mistake there be, was in the handling of the press in London. Herr Wingen ought to have summoned the German correspondents and told them that, during the night, a Memorandum containing preposterous demands on Germany had been communicated to us. The text was still secret, but they should

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<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19, see Editors' Note, p. 208. For their transmission to Berlin see document No. 162, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Mar. 20.



report in the sense that acceptance of the Memorandum was out of the question. If they had been given a warning of this kind the correspondents would have treated the British reports and the information supplied by the British news service with the proper scepticism.

I hope that in the Council today you will have an opportunity of clarifying the question of our equality of rights neatly and elegantly before that august assembly. I can imagine that it will be a highly amusing occasion. Our opponents are likely to suffer no small embarrassment.

With best wishes,

Heil Hitler!

Yours

[BÜLOW]<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> The file copy is unsigned.

## No. 193

6710/E508174-75

### *The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1387

THE HAGUE, March 23, 1936.

Received March 25.

II R 758.

Subject: Offer of a German-Netherlands non-aggression pact.

With reference to my telegram No. 8 of March 16.<sup>1</sup>

The Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> asked me to call on him today and told me that, as Germany's offer to the Netherlands to participate in a possible non-aggression pact had been made orally, he also wished to give me the reply to it orally.

The Minister then went on to say that the Netherlands Government were very grateful for the friendly feelings which had prompted the German Government, in their Memorandum of March 7<sup>3</sup>—subject to the consent of the other Powers concerned—to afford the Netherlands the opportunity of acceding to one or more of the treaties, as proposed in that Memorandum. Nevertheless he was obliged to remind me of the policy which the Netherlands had pursued for many years. This implied among other things that the Netherlands Government declined to become party to any treaties which, in the event of a conflict between other States, might impose on them obligations to render assistance, which, in their opinion, went beyond the obligations imposed by the League of Nations Covenant. In these circumstances the Nether-

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 128.

<sup>2</sup> Jonkheer A. C. D. de Graeff.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure; see also document No. 4.

lands Government felt that for the present they should confine themselves to observing with close attention the further development of events. At the same time they reserved the right, if need be, to define their attitude more precisely as soon as more detailed information regarding the contents and scope of the proposed treaties was available.

Publication of this reply, the Minister told me in conclusion, was not considered necessary here. The Minister asked to be informed should Berlin take a different view, in order that there might be agreement on the timing and contents of a possible public announcement. The Minister will also not inform other Governments about this reply either, but will only communicate its terms to the Netherlands Ministers in the countries concerned for their personal information.

ZECH

## No. 194

6710/E508248-54

*The Chargé d'Affaires in the Soviet Union to the Foreign Ministry*

A 631

Moscow, March 23, 1936.

Received March 25.

II R 782.

Subject: The attitude of the USSR to Germany's action in the Rhineland and to the resolutions of the other Locarno Powers.

Both the reestablishment of German sovereignty over the demilitarized Rhineland zone and Germany's proposals for the tranquillization of Europe were received by the Soviet press with feigned indignation and very marked political annoyance. The latter sentiment was clearly apparent in the personal attacks—attacks as violent as they were contemptible—on the Führer and Chancellor, made in *Isvestia* and *Pravda* on March 8<sup>1</sup> and, above all, in the *Journal de Moscou* on March 10.

The political line of the first Soviet press comments on the events following March 7 was to recommend that an uncompromising attitude be adopted towards Germany; with this object in view, the German danger, which was said to be threatening Western Europe in general and France in particular, was depicted in the blackest colours, and it was repeatedly emphasized that each concession would merely result in fresh German "treaty violations" and "threats to peace".

In this spate of anti-German propaganda, the advocacy of precisely defined concrete measures to be taken against Germany receded into the background. Even so, the whole tone of the Soviet press made it quite clear from the very beginning that in Soviet eyes no pressure on Germany was regarded as being too far-reaching as long as it did not

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 29.

actually lead to war, and that the Soviet Union would willingly approve in advance, and participate in, any future collective coercive measures to be employed against Germany.

In order the better to justify this attitude, Germany's action in the Rhineland was not accepted as a final step, which put an end to a situation which was intolerable for Germany, but was branded as a preparatory measure for future war-like plans. These, so Radek stated in *Isvestia* on March 8, immediately after the German declaration of March 7, could only be effectively met "by swiftly evolving defensive counter-measures". If, however, the Western Powers proved to be "helpless" and failed to show "a unity of purpose and action", they would "sooner or later—and, indeed, probably sooner rather than later—have a war in the West".

The question as to whether the "defensive counter-measures" which were demanded should also include military action was dealt with by Radek in *Isvestia* on March 8 in a way that was noticeably "hedging". The article in question began with the following sentences:

"The impression made by Germany's violation of the Locarno Treaty was considerably less than might have been expected. This can be explained by the fact that, firstly, after three years of the rule of German Fascism the world has become accustomed to much that it would previously have regarded as impossible and, secondly, that the only decisive reaction to the breach, by unilateral action, of a treaty freely entered into—namely, the entry of French troops into the demilitarized zone—would have meant war. No one in his right mind, however, could be the instigator of a preventive war. A preventive war is suicide for fear of death. When, therefore, the representatives of the interested Powers begin their speeches with an appeal for calm, these appeals sound somewhat superfluous."

In the above sentences Radek safeguarded himself against any charge that he was deploring the fact that France had refrained from warlike measures, by using stronger terms in condemnation of preventive war. That, on the other hand, the pregnant phrase "the only decisive reaction" did not flow from his pen by chance, but was intended to assure the advocates in France of sterner measures that they enjoyed Soviet sympathy, was subsequently admitted by Radek himself in a private conversation.

After these expressions of opinion in the Soviet press it was clear what attitude the Soviet Government would adopt on the issue in dispute: Proceeding from the wish to see increased antagonism between France and Germany and an intensification of Germany's isolation, the Soviet Government argued in favour of the strongest possible measures, against an invitation to Germany to come to London, against any negotiations with Germany, against Germany's return to the League of Nations, and in favour of a military guarantee



of France by Britain. This accords with the speech which the Soviet delegate on the Council of the League of Nations, Litvinov, made in London.<sup>2</sup>

The asperity and dialectics of Litvinov's speech made a considerable impression on several members of the *corps diplomatique* here. On the other hand Litvinov's self-confident manner as the champion of the sanctity of treaties evoked sarcastic comment, for every country has had its own instructive experience of the USSR in the matter of interpreting treaties, and particularly so with reference to the well-known obligation concerning non-intervention.<sup>3</sup> It was also observed that Litvinov's objection to the form of the German proposals for tranquillization (the alleged arbitrary choice of the participant States and the alleged imposition on them of a ready-made treaty system) apply much more to his own methods in pursuing his projected Eastern Pact.

Comment was not exactly flattering either on that passage in Litvinov's speech where he described as "a far-fetched hypothesis" the Führer's reference to the possibility of a social upheaval in France. When one of the fundamental tenets of Marx and Lenin, namely that social upheaval must and will come, is described by a People's Commissar of the USSR as "a far-fetched hypothesis", duplicity can indeed scarcely be carried much further. After all, as a member of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, Litvinov is, under Article 1 of the Statutes of the Party, committed to the Party's programme, which states that social revolution is "the ultimate object of the whole activity" of the international Communist Party.

The comments on Litvinov's speech in the Soviet press expressed, beside the usual paeans of praise for the speaker, considerable annoyance at the course of the London Conference. "It was only after ten fruitless and wasted days, which exposed the weakness and irresolution of the defenders of peace" that Litvinov was allowed to have his say in London, said *Isvestia* on March 20.

The same disappointment at the non-attainment of Soviet aims *vis-à-vis* Germany was expressed even more plainly in Radek's article, "The London Agreements", in *Isvestia* on March 22. Radek did, it is true, consider that certain of the results achieved in London were "significant" and "useful for the future", particularly the "legalization of the General Staff talks" between the remaining Locarno Powers. On the whole, however, the feeling of dissatisfaction was the

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 17; for the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 319-323.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently a reference to the undertakings given and received by the Soviet Union on the occasion of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Russia and various other countries (cf. *Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy*, selected and edited by Jane Degras, vol. 1 (London, 1951), *passim*, and *Foreign Relations of the United States—The Soviet Union, 1933-1939* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1952), pp. 28-29).



predominant note of his article, a feeling which sought expression *inter alia* in boasts about the "strong nerves" and "the ability to defend itself" of the Soviet Union, which would continue to be increased "in so far as it should become apparent that the other Powers either could not or would not take steps to strengthen collective security". And Flandin was justified in referring in the Chamber to France's friends in Central and Eastern Europe.<sup>4</sup> For here it was a case not only of the assistance France should render others, but also of the assistance which others should render France, particularly since "the full extent of Britain's further vacillations is not yet known".

Last not least,<sup>5</sup> the press drew attention to the significance of Litvinov's statements regarding the provision, contained in the Soviet treaty system, that a contracting party is released from its obligations in the event of the other contracting party attacking a third State; this provision, it was pointed out, was missing in the German proposals for tranquillization, and this showed Germany's unswerving desire to retain her freedom of action in the East. This explains the indignant criticism by the Soviets of the German proposals for tranquillization, a criticism inspired, no doubt, in no small measure by their fear that the German treaty system, designed to achieve stabilization in the West, might outweigh politically their own "collective security" treaty system and more particularly, the Franco-Soviet Pact.

And so, finally, after all this display of strength and self-confidence, the old Soviet fear that, should Western Europe achieve tranquillity, Russia would not be able to continue to play the part she has played hitherto, has not, even now, failed to find expression.

VON TIPPELSKIRCH

<sup>4</sup> In his statement of Mar. 20, see document No. 180 footnote 4.

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 195

8873/E620363-70

### *The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

TOKYO, March 23, 1936.

987

IV Ja. 518.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Prime Minister Hirota.

I called on Prime Minister Hirota the other day to congratulate him on his new office.<sup>1</sup> I took the opportunity of turning the conversation to various questions of interest to me.

<sup>1</sup> Hirota became Prime Minister of Japan on Mar. 9, 1936; following upon the military rising of Feb. 26.

First I informed Mr. Hirota about the present state of the economic negotiations with Manchukuo<sup>2</sup> and repeated the request that he or the Foreign Ministry should press for our demands to be met in order that the negotiations might have a positive result; this Hirota promised to do.

I then set forth to the Prime Minister the German point of view with regard to the denunciation of Locarno and the abolition of the provisions concerning the demilitarized zone, stressing especially the effects of the Russo-French alliance, and at the same time expressing my satisfaction at the understanding attitude of the Japanese press. Mr. Hirota picked out, in particular, the question of the Franco-Russian assistance pact, and said that it filled Japan with grave concern. France had probably never properly considered what far-reaching consequences this alliance involved.

When I then asked whether there was any truth in the press reports that he had told several other Ambassadors that Japan now wanted to pursue a stronger policy, Mr. Hirota told me the following:

He had not spoken of a stronger policy, but of a more positive one. The position was as follows: Japan was at present isolated; she had withdrawn from the League of Nations, had left the Naval Disarmament Conference, and had thus attained complete freedom of action. However advantageous this was, it was nevertheless necessary to supplement this freedom from commitments by a policy of friendship towards other Powers and especially by disposing of all existing causes of dispute with them. He had therefore given instructions both to Ambassador Arita in Nanking and to Ambassador Ota in Moscow to start negotiations as speedily as possible on all matters outstanding, to further these negotiations by all means in their power, and to bring them to a rapid conclusion. He hoped that this would also succeed in the case of China. When I asked, later in the conversation, whether official negotiations with China, prospects for which had long been held out, would now take place, the Prime Minister replied with the one word "probably".

As to the questions pending between Japan and the Soviet Union, Mr. Hirota mentioned, as the principal subjects for negotiation, the fisheries dispute and the matter of the Russo-Manchurian frontier settlement, and also the problem of setting up a demilitarized zone on the Amur. In this connection Hirota also stressed the need for Manchurian-Mongolian negotiations on the latest frontier incidents<sup>3</sup> and the reciprocal acceptance of diplomatic representatives. To my sceptical question whether Outer Mongolia would entertain this point, Mr. Hirota made the vague reply: "That is precisely the knotty point

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 782.

<sup>3</sup> Reports from Moscow and Tokyo on these incidents and on attempts to reach a settlement are filmed on Serial 8887; see also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 511.

of the dispute." There was, however, he said, no danger with regard to relations with Outer Mongolia.

When I asked whether, from what he had observed, Britain was turning increasingly to the Soviet Union, Mr. Hirota replied quite definitely, as he had done once before in an earlier conversation,<sup>4</sup> that in his opinion this was not the case. When I sounded him further about Japanese relations with Britain, he said that the interests of both parties in China had caused certain difficulties for a time. It was, however, possible that in time there would be agreement, by means of negotiation, on the delimitation of these interests; Leith-Ross<sup>5</sup> would perhaps come to Japan for negotiations at some later date.

Mr. Hirota then said, of his own accord and with a certain emphasis, that it was gratifying to note that German-Japanese relations were so good; all quarters in Japan entertained feelings of friendship for Germany. I confirmed this and emphasized that the same feelings obtained in Germany *vis-à-vis* Japan.

Mr. Hirota then went on to say that there were indeed no matters in dispute between the two countries; the only consideration that sometimes caused a certain amount of disquiet was the German demand for colonies, since it was feared that Germany wished to regain her colonies in the South Seas.

Mindful of my earlier conversation with Mr. Hirota on the same subject, I confined myself, as reported in another connection,<sup>6</sup> to remarking that for us the colonial question was essentially a question which affected the principle of equality of rights; I was glad that the Japanese press had of late scarcely touched upon this question.

With regard to the filling of the post of Foreign Minister, Mr. Hirota told me that Ambassador Arita would be coming to Japan in a few weeks' time;<sup>7</sup> it was uncertain, however, whether he would stay here.

The Embassy in Nanking has received a copy of this report by a sure hand.

DIRKSEN

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<sup>4</sup> A report on this conversation has not been found.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Frederick Leith-Ross, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government, who was in China September 1935-June 1936.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 196.

<sup>7</sup> Arita was appointed Foreign Minister on Apr. 2.

## No. 196

6710/E509113-18

*The Ambassador in Japan to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1069

Tokyo, March 23, 1936,

Received April 14.

II R 1076.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Japan's attitude towards the most recent German action in the Rhineland question.

With reference to my telegram No. 61 of March 10, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

Whilst for a number of reasons one could expect public opinion in Japan to show understanding and sympathy for Germany's determined action in the Rhineland question, it was on the other hand only natural that, in view of Japan's manifold international interests and the official doctrine of non-intervention which these interests impose upon Japan, as also in view of the persistent rumours about a German-Japanese alliance, that Japan should not have been able wholeheartedly to champion the German point of view.

It was therefore not surprising that the Japanese press took up, at least in as far as the purely legal aspects of Germany's action were concerned (which, incidentally, the press was largely at pains to describe as being of quite minor importance), an attitude which did not do justice to the German arguments and that it frequently adopted, in superficial observations, the thesis of the opposite side. Thus, to begin with the few negative aspects of the Japanese attitude, the familiar view was frequently advanced that a breach of the voluntarily concluded Locarno Treaty was far more serious than a contravention of the compulsorily imposed Treaty of Versailles. It was said that, even if it were assumed that the Locarno Pact had been rendered legally invalid by the Franco-Russian Pact, yet the German action still represented a violation of the relevant demilitarization provisions of the Versailles Treaty which had merely been given an additional safeguard, but not a new interpretation, in the Locarno Pact.

But, in their purely political assessment of the German action, the Japanese press almost all adopted a tone markedly contrasting with these and similar juridical arguments; as already stated they made no bones about attributing actual practical significance only to this politically realist [*realpolitischen*] aspect of the problem; or indeed about holding it to be extremely dangerous and detrimental to the peace of Europe to entrench oneself behind legal quibbles and to set

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 59.



oneself up in a vacuum to pass judgment on a breach of treaties which had long since been deprived of any real foundation. Put in a nutshell, the Japanese view was to the effect that whilst it was not strictly possible to hold that the Russo-French Pact was a violation of the letter of the Locarno Treaty, yet nevertheless this Pact was undoubtedly incompatible with the spirit and meaning of Locarno and created conditions which, had they existed at the time, would have rendered the conclusion of the Locarno Treaty in its present form impossible.

The decisive factor in determining this coincidence of German and Japanese views as to the effects of the Russian Pact on Europe was undoubtedly, in the first place, Japan's own anxiety as to the Far Eastern repercussions of the Pact. This anxiety had already been voiced in various press comments and semi-official statements before the most recent events in Europe, at the time of the debates in the French Chamber on the ratification of the Franco-Russian Treaty, but, with Germany's abrogation of Locarno and the ratification of the Russian Pact in the [French] Senate, it found stronger expression and it has now been evinced in official statements too. It has been repeatedly emphasized that the present tension in Europe also directly affects Japan, since its most recent cause lies in the Franco-Russian Pact of Assistance. It was held that, not only must this Pact have given Germany the feeling of being systematically encircled, thus providing her with a reason for repudiating the Locarno Pact, but that this Franco-Russian Pact was also calculated to give rise to the impression in Japan that its object could be to harness France to Russian aspirations in the Far East. One has on various occasions come across the view in the press that France must have been either misled or duped into support of the Russian plans by insinuations about the threat of German aggression, or that she must be secretly supporting Russia against Japan. For on one point all comments here were unanimous, namely that Russia attaches greater importance to the promotion of her Far Eastern policy than to the defence of her Western frontiers and that in spite of all French assurances about the Franco-Russian Pact being confined to the West, any reduction of pressure on Russia's Western frontier must indirectly entail the danger of a considerable strengthening of Russia's position in the Far East.

This understanding Japanese attitude (apart from a very few exceptions) towards the political background of the present dilemma in Europe may, apart from its connection with the Russian Pact, well have been determined by several other points of view and sentiments. One such is undoubtedly the tendency to take every opportunity of underlining the impotence of the League of Nations as at present legally and politically constituted and the inefficacy of the sanctions imposed by the League. Then again there is the fact that in the Far East Japan is engaged in a struggle against the perpetuation of outdated

treaties which is very akin to Germany's struggles against the treaty structure of Versailles. In Germany's attack on the Versailles Treaty and on every restriction on her equality of rights, Japan may well see a parallel to her own attack against the Washington treaty structure<sup>2</sup> and in particular against the Nine-Power Pact,<sup>3</sup> which in Japanese eyes is not compatible with the actual political situation in the East and with the emergence of Japan as the sole stabilizing power in the Far East. Thus Germany's latest moves in the Rhineland question will have been felt to be indirectly lending moral support to Japan's demands, too. This naturally makes it easy to understand the special emphasis placed on the unmistakable and irrefutable political logic of Germany's action. In almost identical words the press here has been unanimous in declaring that the abrogation of the Locarno Treaty, which still remained an obstacle to Germany's equality of rights, was, in view of the recovery of German military sovereignty last year, both a political necessity and a matter of course. The attempt to draw a parallel between Italy's action in Abyssinia and Germany's action in the Rhineland was described as quite irrelevant. The Rhineland, it was said, was German soil. Now that Germany, with compelling political logic, had, step by step, come near to completely regaining her sovereignty and thus to finally undermining the Versailles Treaty, Locarno too had to go by the board, for in reality Locarno had not been much more than a revision of the Versailles Treaty, which had not been functioning satisfactorily. The time had therefore come to revise Locarno. The present tension, it was said, should not be allowed to culminate in the condemnation of Germany but should be regarded as pronouncing sentence of death upon the League of Nations system, as at present constituted, and all its works. The consolidation of peace in Europe must now be taken in hand on an entirely new basis, in keeping with actual political facts. For this purpose, the proposals of the Führer, who had shown himself to be a great diplomat and tactician, provided an important starting point, all the more so since there could be no doubt of the sincerity of the German professions of peace. There was still time to retrieve past mistakes and to replace with new and better treaties those old ones which had been supported only hesitantly because of the inner conviction that they were of questionable value.

<sup>2</sup> The reference is to: (a) the Treaty between the British Empire, France, Japan and the United States of America relating to their Insular Possessions and Insular Dominions in the Pacific Ocean, signed in Washington, Dec. 13, 1921; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xxv, pp. 184-193; (b) the Treaty between the British Empire, the United States of America, Belgium, China, France, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands and Portugal relating to Principles and Policies to be followed in matters concerning China, signed in Washington on Feb. 6, 1922; for the text see *ibid.*, vol. xxxviii, pp. 278-284; (c) the Treaty between the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and the United States of America for the Limitation of Naval Armaments, signed at Washington on Feb. 6, 1922; for the text see *ibid.*, vol. xxv, pp. 196-227.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the treaty cited under (b) in footnote 2 above.

If this sympathetic support by Japanese public opinion (which is alleged to have amounted to lively approval in army circles) was not quite unlimited, and if to a certain extent there fell a shadow across Japan's favourable attitude towards Germany's final assault on the Treaty of Versailles, this should not, as might be supposed, be attributed to our offer to return to the League of Nations or to Japanese concern over the possible repercussions of an Eastern non-aggression pact, but to the sufficiently well-known sensitiveness felt by Japan over the question of Germany's claim for the return of her colonies. The fear that this claim might include a demand for the return of the former German South Seas possessions has been expressed less in the press than in conversations. In these it became apparent that, apart from the various problems arising from the Franco-Russian Pact, it is only by reason of the question of mandates and colonies that Japan is directly interested in current events in Europe and that this alone could, perhaps, cause Japan to emerge from her rôle of strictly neutral observer.

How greatly this problem occupies people's minds here was clearly shown by the fact that both Prime Minister Hirota and Head of Department Togo<sup>4</sup> brought up the question of Germany's colonial demands in conversations which I have had with them during the last few days. Mindful of my previous conversation with Mr. Hirota on the same subject (see my report No. 1152 of March 26, 1935),<sup>5</sup> I cautiously confined myself to saying that for Germany the question of colonies was one which affected the principle of equality of rights; it was gratifying that the press had not brought this question up again now.

Mr. Hirota, to whom, in the course of our conversation, I set forth the German point of view on the Rhineland question, picked out in particular the Franco-Russian alliance and declared, as incidentally did also the Deputy Foreign Minister, Shigemitsu, whom I saw a few days ago on another matter, that the Pact in question filled Japan with the gravest misgivings.

In accordance with your instructions of March 6—No. 39<sup>6</sup>—the Embassy has been at pains, through the channels available to it, to bring influence to bear both orally and in writing on the press and to endeavour to bring about, in particular, a more sympathetic juridical assessment of the steps which Germany has taken in the Rhineland. A copy of the enclosed memorandum,<sup>7</sup> which was drafted by Counsellor of Legation Kolb, has been sent confidentially, accompanied by a Japanese translation, to the Foreign Ministry and to a

<sup>4</sup> Shigenori Togo, Head of the Europe and Asia Department of the Japanese Foreign Ministry.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (6694/H099874-76).

<sup>6</sup> i.e., telegram No. 39 of Mar. 6, the number under which document No. 7 was transmitted to Tokyo.

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (6710/E509119-22).



number of leading Japanese publicists. It may be expected that the ideas elaborated therein will succeed especially in influencing the weekly and monthly periodicals which, in Japan, are extremely influential.

V. DIRKSEN

No. 197

4620/E200330-33

*Ambassador Dirksen to State Secretary Bülow*

TOP SECRET

TOKYO, March 23, 1936.

PERSONAL

Typed by sender himself.

DEAR BÜLOW: Thank you very much for your secret and personal letter of February 15,<sup>1</sup> which reached me by courier. I can give the following replies to the questions you ask:

1) I know nothing whatever about Colonel Ott<sup>2</sup> being in touch with Ribbentrop and Canaris<sup>3</sup> by means of a private cipher. I am, indeed, firmly of the opinion that this information which has reached you is not correct. No doubt there is a confusion here with the fact that Colonel Ott has occasionally—twice, as far as I have been able to discover—telegraphed direct to the Reich War Ministry. Colonel Ott has kept me informed of this and about the other steps taken by him in this matter.

The cipher telegrams despatched direct to the Reich War Ministry concern two, as follows: a) A telegram dated November 5, 1935,<sup>4</sup> to the effect that, according to confidential information reaching Ott, the Chief of the General Staff, Prince Kanin, had agreed with the programme of work for Berlin. The expert dealing with the matter here had left on November 4 and was to express the Army's willingness to take part in the negotiations and to ascertain Berlin's proposals. The Army wished to take further decisions after his return in February. b) A telegram dated January 15, 1936,<sup>4</sup> in which Colonel Ott suggests, in view of the far-reaching plans of the General Staff here with regard to Outer Mongolia, that in the Berlin discussions we should keep our minds on safeguards and where possible should advise caution, since German opinion carries much weight with the Japanese. So much for the direct telegrams which it has been possible to find out about.

<sup>1</sup> Not found. See however vol. IV of this Series, document No. 479 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Col. Eugen Ott, German Military Attaché in Tokyo.

<sup>3</sup> Admiral Canaris, Head of the Abteilung Abwehr of the Wehrmachtamt in the War Ministry.

<sup>4</sup> Not found in the Foreign Ministry archives, but see vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 948.



The telegrams were enciphered by means of a cipher machine with which the Attachés have been provided by the Reich War Ministry. It is called the "Enigma". A variable keyword, agreed with Berlin, is used as the setting and the enciphering is based on it. The cipher is said to be unbreakable.

I have no evidence that Colonel Ott is in direct touch with Ribbentrop or Canaris. The whole of his correspondence in this matter was conducted with his competent department in the Reich War Ministry. And I definitely do not believe that Ott has been in touch by cipher, or indeed by letter, with Herr Kriebel<sup>5</sup> in Shanghai; at any rate I have no evidence of this either. I do not consider Colonel Ott capable of such disloyalty.

The need for direct cipher contact with the Reich War Ministry arose from the fact that he first learned of the negotiations begun by Ribbentrop and Canaris, not from Berlin, but from the responsible Head of Department here. The latter then made him promise not to inform either the Foreign Ministry or the Embassy, since the Foreign Ministry here and the Japanese Embassy at your end were not in the picture either. Despite this promise, Colonel Ott—rightly, in my view—considered it incumbent upon him to inform me. He only asked me to observe the strictest secrecy. Since Ribbentrop was also concerned and since, as a member of the Foreign Ministry, it was his duty to keep his Ministry informed, I at first kept silent and waited to see whether the discussions would survive even the initial stage.

It thus became necessary for Colonel Ott to transmit direct to the Reich War Ministry any important news that came to his knowledge here. He kept me constantly informed about his discussions and the steps he was taking. I need hardly emphasize that he made constant efforts towards applying the brakes and restraint. If only for this reason I consider any direct contact with Rib[bentrop], who seems to have acted pretty unconcernedly and not to have been burdened with any special knowledge of the subject, to be extremely improbable.

When I saw that the discussions were becoming more involved and that the Foreign Ministry's expected request for my views on the whole complex of questions was not forthcoming, I considered it necessary to intervene. Since I was unable to assess the situation in Berlin, my intervention took the form of sending the memorandum to Erdmannsdorf<sup>6</sup> with a request that he submit it to you and to Herr v. Neurath should he think it advisable. The whole matter was further complicated by the fact that Ribbentrop, who, I suppose, is not much accustomed to office procedure, took a hand, and that the matter dealt with by Kriebel also played a part. It would be better if precisely

<sup>5</sup> H. Kriebel, German Consul General in Shanghai. See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 416, 451, 452, 466 and 493.

<sup>6</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 479.

these confidential matters were to remain solely in the hands of the experts concerned.

2) My memorandum should be seen in this context. That it would not fit into the Berlin landscape was to be expected; and it is clear that, in view of the proposed action concerning demilitarization and Locarno, it will have to be consigned to the files until such time as the combination becomes actual again, which, however, I expect to happen in the near future.

You also warn me against appearing, *vis-à-vis* the Japanese, to be initiated into these negotiations. I have *of course* spoken about all these questions *only* to Colonel Ott, but otherwise not to any member of the Embassy and most certainly not to any Japanese.

3) The point I made in a letter to Erdmannsdorf that we could not simply drop the discussions without further ado, because we were represented by two high-ranking official personages, you reject and you speak of the possibility of disowning them at any time. Here I cannot agree with you. After all, there is surely nothing more official than for a high-ranking official of the Foreign Ministry and one of the Reich War Ministry—what is more, both of them together!—to approach an equally official personage on the other side with a question of such momentous import. And if we, for our part, only wanted to take soundings, we ought not to have let the discussions continue for months; we ought not to have allowed the competent official here to travel to Berlin solely for this purpose. We ought to have stopped the discussions long ago. At all events the discussions have been regarded here as having been conducted with responsible persons, and, politically speaking, we should no longer be taken seriously here if we were simply to disown Ribbentrop, who is now the representative of the Reich Government in London. There is, I suppose, no danger now of precipitancy in the matter itself. I hope I shall be able to discuss this question with you by word of mouth in the near future if my plans for leave mature.

In conclusion, again many thanks also for your letter telling me of the impending visit of the Heye family of Düsseldorf. They have meanwhile all been here, and I looked after them as well as was possible in view of the fact that their stay in Tokyo lasted only two days.

Well then, *au revoir* I really hope soon, and best wishes.

As always,

Yours,

DIRKSEN

## No. 198

6710/E508132

*The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 36 of March 24

VIENNA, March 24, 1936—1:20 p.m.

Received March 24—4:30 p.m.

II R 747.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

Letters from my French relatives indicate that public opinion, in complete contrast to the press and the Government, is demanding the speedy acceptance of the twenty-five-year pact.<sup>1</sup> If Hitler continues to speak as he did at Frankfurt<sup>2</sup> and addresses himself directly to the French people, he will smash Sarraut's election platform in favour of a vote for or against Hitler. People in France want clear-cut relationships at last, instead of a pact which only the experts can interpret.

PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., the pact proposed in the German Memorandum of Mar. 7; see document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> For extracts from Hitler's speech at Frankfurt on Mar. 16 see Baynes: *Hitler's Speeches*, vol. II, pp. 1310-1311.

## No. 199

4620/E200211-13

*Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff to State Secretary Bülow*

LONDON, March 24, 1936.

DEAR BÜLOW: Unfortunately I have not enough time to reply in more detail to your long and instructive letter of March 23,<sup>1</sup> which I received yesterday evening. I have, however, given it to Woermann and Schmieden to read, and together we shall try to remedy in future the regrettable lack of quantitative reporting. But please do not count on me personally too much in this respect, firstly, because I do not know very much about quantitative reporting on League of Nations procedure, and secondly, because, in my view, my main task here lies in other directions. First and foremost I try to ensure harmonious cooperation within the Delegation, and this has so far been most successful; after that, my main task, as I see it, is to try and influence public opinion here in order that it may—contrary to certain tendencies within the Government here—show sympathy for the German point of view. I believe that our efforts in this direction during the last

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 192.

six days have not been in vain and that we have thereby greatly strengthened the German position in a situation which was indeed extremely difficult. (I trust that the German reply<sup>2</sup> which Ribbentrop is bringing with him today is couched in terms such as will enable us to turn it still more to our advantage.) In this work, which, of course, I do for the most part behind the scenes, my old contacts in London and elsewhere in Britain<sup>3</sup> have stood me in good stead; I was myself surprised to find how many old acquaintances in the most varied walks of life still remembered me, gave me a friendly welcome and placed themselves at my disposal. I need hardly say that I do not submit any official reports on this branch of my activities, which takes up almost all my time from morning till late at night, but perhaps people in Berlin will be more lenient with my other "short comings"<sup>4</sup> if they take this into consideration.

With cordial greetings,  
Yours ever

DIECKHOFF

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 207 and 208.

<sup>3</sup> Dieckhoff was Counsellor at the German Embassy in London 1926-1930.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 200

6710/E508094-96

### *Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, March 24, 1936—2:00 p.m.  
e.o. II R 730.

For information and language to be held.

The Führer and Chancellor has decided first to communicate to the British Government an interim, general statement of views<sup>2</sup> on the document of the Locarno Powers,<sup>3</sup> and has reserved until March 31<sup>4</sup> concrete proposals for providing a way out of the situation. But even this interim statement makes it unmistakably clear that the solution cannot be found on the basis of the London document.<sup>3</sup> The decisions to be taken by the Powers concerned are of such importance for the whole political situation in Europe, that it is in the general interest to

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Rome, Paris, Ankara, Madrid, Warsaw, Buenos Aires, Bucharest, Copenhagen, Lisbon, Quito, Santiago de Chile, Berne (No. 40), Athens, Budapest, Stockholm, Oslo, The Hague, Washington, Helsinki and Brussels, the Consulate General at Sydney and the Consulate at Geneva. The Embassy in London and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff of the German Delegation there received copies by air.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 207.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> This date originally read "April 2"; it was amended to "March 31" in Neurath's handwriting.



avoid precipitate commitments which might prejudice a reasonable general settlement. The manner in which the French and the Belgians, by their formal request to the Council of the League of Nations,<sup>5</sup> have set the discussions in train, has, to too great a degree, concentrated attention on the Rhineland, whereas in reality it is the questions posed by the European political situation itself which are up for discussion. This view is very generally held outside Germany too. Italy's attitude, and the views of several other Council Powers not directly concerned, in themselves suffice to show that the situation cannot as yet in any way be regarded as clarified.

A special complication is the imminence of the French elections, which, according to past experience, always adversely affect the attitude and deliberations of the Government in office. It will therefore be best to conduct the negotiations in such a way that actual decisions are reached only after these elections. At any discussion of the whole complex of questions you should stress that there is no urgent necessity at all to come to rapid decisions and that any time gained can only improve the prospects of a reasonable and lasting solution.

Further instructions concerning the German proposals announced above are reserved.<sup>6</sup>

VON NEURATH<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 45.

<sup>6</sup> No further instructions have been found.

<sup>7</sup> The text of the document here printed was repeated by Renthe-Fink by telegram of Mar. 24 to the Missions in Dublin, Prague, Vienna, Belgrade, Sofia, Moscow, Kovno, Riga and Tallinn, the Consulate General at Montreal and the Consulate at Cape Town (6710/E508097).

## No. 201

3242/712525

### *Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, March 30, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

I have been so much occupied in London that today is the first chance I have had of making a note of the following:

The President of the Council of the League of Nations, Mr. Bruce, asked me to visit him before the Council met on Tuesday, March 24. When I arrived shortly before 4 o'clock to see Mr. Bruce at St. James' Palace, the Secretary General, M. Avenol, was still there. Mr. Bruce told me that at the impending meeting several of the Council representatives intended to move that the Council adjourn *sine die*, and asked me whether my Government would have objection to this. I

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<sup>1</sup> This document is printed here for the convenience of the reader.

told Mr. Bruce in reply that the German Government would have no objections to an adjournment. Mr. Bruce then went on to say that it was not certain that a motion for adjournment would be accepted; the possibility would in any case have to be taken into account that the Council might embark on a discussion of the Locarno Powers' White Paper.<sup>2</sup> I then pointed out both to Mr. Bruce and to M. Avenol that in such an event I would immediately raise the question as to what would be the status of the German delegate in these deliberations of the Council.<sup>3</sup> At the last meeting of the Council, on March 20, Herr von Ribbentrop had refrained from bringing up this question,<sup>4</sup> since the Council had dealt solely with matters of procedure, but, as soon as a discussion of the actual matter in hand was embarked upon, this question would have to be raised by the German side. Both gentlemen appreciated this attitude. The conversation ended with our having agreed that I should not bring up the question of the status of the German delegate if the Council adjourned without embarking on a discussion of the actual proposals of the Locarno Powers, but that, as soon as such discussion began, I should immediately raise this question.<sup>5</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>2</sup> The words "White Paper" are in English in the original; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 163.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 168.

<sup>5</sup> In the Delegation's telegram No. 7 of Mar. 24 (6710/E508121-22) Dieckhoff reported that, at the President's suggestion, the Council had resolved to adjourn *sine die*. (See also Editors' Note below.)

[EDITORS' NOTE. On March 24 the Council of the League of Nations held its eighth (private) meeting in London, the last to be held there. Discussion of the text of proposals by the representatives of the Locarno Powers members of the League was continued and the Council adopted a resolution, (1) "that any further action on its part should remain in abeyance for the present in view of the conversations which are being carried on", (2) inviting the Governments concerned to keep it advised of the progress of these conversations, (3) deciding to meet again "as soon as circumstances rendered further consideration of the question desirable". (See League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 346-347.) It was further decided to hold the next meeting in Geneva; the Council, in fact, next met on April 20, 1936, to consider the Italo-Abyssinian dispute.]

## No. 202

6710/E508138

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 32 of March 24

BELGRADE, March 24, 1936—7:30 p.m.

Received March 24—10:40 p.m.

II R 751.

Assistant Minister Martinać,<sup>1</sup> to whom, basing myself on your telegram No. 32 of March 23,<sup>2</sup> I explained why the proposals of the Locarno Powers<sup>3</sup> were ill-advised, showed himself completely sympathetic. The Yugoslav Government, he said, were constantly endeavouring to exert a moderating influence in Paris and would continue to do so.

Martinać then informed me of the contents of a telegram, just received from the Yugoslav Legation in London, according to which the French Delegation was very disappointed at the course of the conflict [*sic*] so far. Any energetic action against Germany was becoming increasingly difficult owing to Britain's discussions with Germany. The British promise of immediate assistance applied only to the West and not to the East or the South East. Flandin therefore intended to fill this gap by means of appropriate agreements with Russia and Italy.

HEEREN

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<sup>1</sup> Vladislav Martinać, joint Assistant Minister in the Yugoslav Foreign Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 176 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

## No. 203

6710/E508192

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Argentina to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 30 of March 24

BUENOS AIRES, March 24, 1936—8:08 p.m.

Received March 25—4:15 a.m.

II R 767.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 35<sup>1</sup> and 36.<sup>2</sup>

Foreign Minister Saavedra Lamas, to whom I spoke today in the sense of your telegrams under reference, explained at some length that the familiar statement by the Argentine representative on the Council<sup>3</sup> should be regarded as being purely academic and that it in no way

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 176 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 158, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of Ruiz Guinazu's statement of Mar. 18, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, pp. 330-331.

prejudiced Argentina's future attitude towards positive German proposals. This attitude was inspired by the sincere desire to help her friend Germany in every way possible. Argentina regarded the Locarno Pact as a regional European Pact, which exclusively concerned the signatories thereof. Argentina would therefore not consent to other League of Nations States being made guarantors or responsible for the execution of the Locarno Pact. As far as the League of Nations was concerned, Article 11 of the League Covenant alone was relevant, and this with the object of peaceful mediation and recommendations. The Argentine attitude was substantially in accord with the views of the neutral States as described in your telegram No. 39.<sup>4</sup> The [Argentine] representative on the Council had been instructed accordingly and had been directed to consult with the other neutrals. The Minister spoke disapprovingly about France's aggressive attitude and emphasized the importance of gaining time.

The following is top secret: The Foreign Minister repeatedly said that he would be grateful for any confidential suggestions and for more precise information about the German Government's intentions, and that he was prepared, in the interests of a peaceful settlement, to support them with the other neutral States through the Argentine representative on the Council. I had the impression that Saavedra Lamas, whose personal egotism is well known, would like, to some degree, to play the part of mediator, and this, in certain circumstances, might prove useful. I would therefore suggest that his wish be met as far as possible and that I be furnished with the appropriate instructions.<sup>5</sup>

HEBERLEIN

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 179 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> No such instructions have been found.

## No. 204

5753/H040584-86

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 46 of March 24

ROME, March 24, 1936—8:20 p.m.

Received March 24—11:15 p.m.

II It. 337.

Kánya gave me the following information today regarding the Italo-Austro-Hungarian conversations<sup>1</sup> which have now been concluded:

All the agreements now concluded were contained in the Protocols

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 165 and footnote 3 thereto.



published today. As I would have seen, they contained nothing sensational, but only confirmed the previous political trend, which it had been necessary to do in order to counteract the false impressions which had been gaining ground. I drew attention to the somewhat striking phrase "constitute themselves a group", to which he replied that, as was known, it was consonant with the trend of Hungarian policy to lay even stronger stress upon the close relations existing between the three countries. Originally they had had in mind the term "Entente" or the like, but had abandoned it, as they did not wish to create the impression of an alliance, which at the moment it seemed inexpedient to do; he himself had then suggested the word "group". He wished to add, in strict confidence, that a further subject which had been discussed in detail had been the question of extending this group to include other countries. It was true that Berlin had expressly assured him that Germany did not intend to accede to the Rome Protocol[s].<sup>2</sup> Nevertheless, for Hungary, the most desirable countries to include would be, first Germany, then Poland, but no other countries. He had ascertained that Mussolini fully shared this point of view, and in particular that he attached great importance to consolidating relations with Germany and desired a settlement between Austria and Germany. The Austrians too had expressed their concurrence with the idea of including the two countries in question, albeit with the reservation, where Germany was concerned, that relations between Berlin and Vienna would first have to be restored to a normal footing. In this respect, Gömbös and Kánya had pressed the Austrians very hard. He was firmly convinced that Schuschnigg wished to come to an understanding, and he was prepared to stake his reputation that all flirting with France and Czechoslovakia would come to a full stop the moment an understanding with Germany was assured. Schuschnigg had, indeed, said that, in view of previous experiences, bilateral negotiation offered little prospect of success. He, Kánya, and Gömbös too, still hoped that the Reich, as the stronger, would devise some gesture which would inspire confidence in the weaker and make an understanding possible. I emphasized the necessity of first settling the question of the National Socialist Party in Austria and mentioned the recent offer of a non-aggression pact<sup>3</sup> and the sceptical and ambiguous reception which Vienna had accorded to the offer. This Kánya admitted, invoking the familiar arguments which have also been set forth in the Austrian press. In any case, he continued, the antagonism between Berlin and Vienna was the trump card which France and Czechoslovakia were playing off against a development which would correspond to the true interests of Germany-Austria [*sic*] and Hungary. Consideration had been given, during the negotiations, as to whether the

<sup>2</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 597.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 77; see also documents Nos. 80 and 90.

idea of bringing in other countries—i.e., Germany and Poland—should be set down in a secret protocol or the like. They had eventually abandoned this idea and contented themselves with a verbal agreement. The inclusion of the Little Entente was, he said, out of the question, the more so since Hungary would, now as previously, be obliged to oppose political agreements with the Little Entente. In the view of the Little Entente, such agreements should be in the nature of pacts of mutual assistance or should be linked to Article 16, neither of which was acceptable to Hungary, and Austria and Italy had associated themselves with this point of view. In the economic respect it had been agreed, as was clear from the Protocols, to enter into none but bilateral arrangements in the Danubian region. In reply to a question from me, he stated that he had raised with Berger-Waldenegg the matter of the preferences under the Czech-Austrian Protocol;<sup>4</sup> the latter had told him that it was in any case only Czechoslovakia and not Austria who was to concede preferences. Hungary could, in principle, scarcely object to such preferences in Austria's favour, unless any particular preference should prove prejudicial to specific Hungarian interests.

With regard to Kánya's remarks about Mussolini's very friendly attitude towards Germany, I said that I did not doubt it, but that I was somewhat concerned at the overt attempts being made in Paris to purchase French assistance in abolishing sanctions by means of promises along the lines of Stresa. Kánya said he thought that such efforts, if they really were being made, offered very little prospect of success as yet, since the Italians themselves were expecting Britain to adopt a stiff attitude once the Rhineland conflict had been settled. I added that, apart from this, it was to be feared that Italy would be financially dependent on France once the Abyssinian conflict had come to an end. Kánya ended by saying that the most effective way in which we could spoil the Franco-Czech game would be by redeeming the mortgage on Austro-German relations.<sup>5</sup>

HASSELL<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the Supplementary Agreement to the Commercial Agreement signed at Prague, May 4, 1921, between the Republic of Austria and the Czechoslovak Republic; it was signed at Vienna on Apr. 2, 1936 (for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXXX, pp. 51-440).

<sup>5</sup> An attached minute (5753/H040587) reads: "H[err] Lorenz. H[err] v. Papen has just asked for speedy information about [the] Rome [conversations] for a forthcoming discussion. I should like to send the Rome telegram [here printed] to Vienna today as a cipher letter [5753/H040589]. Hei[n]burg, Mar. 25."

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 49 of Mar. 26 (5753/H040592) Hassell reported that Kánya's statements about the Additional Protocols had been confirmed by Suvich.

## No. 205

9592/E876335

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 24, 1936.

II Lu. 777.

M. Mastný, who called upon me today, mentioned in the course of the conversation that Reich Minister Göring had asserted some time ago, in a conversation with him, that airfields were being prepared for the Russian air force in Czechoslovakia. When he, Mastný, had disputed this, Reich Minister Göring had replied that he did not doubt Mastný's good faith since M. M[astný] was undoubtedly not informed as to what was really going on. He, Mastný, had reported on the matter to Beneš during his most recent visit to Prague and Beneš had given him a formal assurance that Reich Minister Göring's assertion was incorrect, no preparations whatever were being made for the Soviet Russian air force to land in Czechoslovakia.<sup>1</sup>

I told M. Mastný in reply that these declarations would assuredly not dispel the mistrust which had been brought about in Germany by the conclusion of the Czechoslovak-Russian alliance and the many visits of Russian military personnel to Czechoslovakia. This mistrust could only be dispelled gradually and only then if the facts showed that these obvious suspicions were unfounded.

RENTHE-FINK

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<sup>1</sup> No other record of Göring's conversation with Mastný has been found; for Eisenlohr's report of assurances received from Beneš on Feb. 21, see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 580.

## No. 206

6680/H096418

*War Minister Blomberg to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

[BERLIN,] March 24, 1936.

Via Colonel General v. Seeckt.

Ambassador Trautmann states, on the basis of his farewell visit to you,<sup>2</sup> that you will not be interested in the negotiations of the Gu[sic Ku]-Robert Chi Commission<sup>3</sup> if Klein's deliveries to Canton are not broken off.

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<sup>1</sup> This copy of the document here printed was sent to the Foreign Ministry under cover of document No. 281.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 156.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 156, footnote 4.

With reference to my telegram of February 14,<sup>4</sup> it is again confirmed that deliveries of armaments to Canton through Hapro are only made with your agreement.

Hapro is setting up for Canton a small arsenal to manufacture fourteen light guns and nine light mortars, 300 rounds of artillery ammunition and 200 rounds of mortar ammunition per month.

This contract was concluded in 1933, submitted to you in August 1934 by Klein in the presence of Robert Chi, and handed over to State Secretary Wong Wen-hao on November 13, 1935, in Nanking. Arms and a poison gas installation have not been supplied.

Hapro is now a state-owned company and will in future work only in accordance with my instructions.

I assume that there was a misunderstanding on the occasion of Trautmann's audience. I would request you to confirm by telegram that you have full confidence in the plan approved by me and that the Gu [*sic*] Commission is charged with conducting negotiations in your name and concluding a credit agreement.

V. BLOMBERG

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<sup>4</sup> For the text of this telegram see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 552, footnote 1.

## No. 207

63/43969-74

### *Note to the British Government*<sup>1</sup>

[Undated.]

On March 19 the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Eden, gave Ambassador von Ribbentrop, who was then in London, the first cognizance of the draft in question of a proposal on the part of the Locarno Powers.<sup>2</sup>

After the receipt of this document the German Government were invited to state their attitude towards it.

In complying with this request the German Government feel themselves impelled first to repeat the principles and the motives from which the inward necessity of their attitude will become clear.

1. The Reich Government, being convinced that by the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance the legal and political pre-conditions on which the Rhine Pact of Locarno was based have been removed, have determined for their part to restore at last their full sovereignty over the entire territory of the German Reich.

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<sup>1</sup> A draft of this Note, with emendations in Hitler's and Neurath's handwriting, is filmed as 3242/712597-605. For the circumstances of its transmission by Ribbentrop on Mar. 24 see document No. 208.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 162.



They did not, however, order the German troops to march into this territory of the German Reich in order to carry out a course of action for its own sake, but they considered this action necessary in order to provide for Germany the pre-conditions under which she could become a party to a new agreement for a clear and reasonable organization of peace in Europe. This pre-condition will at all times only be found in the complete equality of rights of the nations joining in such common action.

This German action of restoring at last the full sovereignty of the Reich in its own territory cannot, therefore, be separated from the agreements proposed by the German Government to the other nations for securing European peace in general.<sup>3</sup>

2. If the other States and Governments should for their part also be prepared to seek the way leading to such a new system for the securing of peace in Europe, they cannot reject forthwith the elementary principles and pre-conditions for such a development, pointing towards the future. For the following must be clearly understood: Lasting agreements between the European nations with the aim of really guaranteeing peace can only be concluded in an atmosphere of sympathetic recognition and consideration of the natural, equal, vital and political rights of all the peoples participating therein. Every attempt to introduce a new system of order in Europe by the old methods of a hate-inspired division of the nations into those with more and those with less rights, into defamed and honourable nations, or even into dictator nations and subject nations, must lead to the same result because begun under the old conditions, which have proved to be pernicious, i.e., the new order will be no better than the old.

It would be advantageous for future developments in Europe if all parties were to understand that treaties and dictates acquire a differing legal value in the life of the peoples. The dictate will probably appear to the victor to be its own legal justification, but will always be regarded by the vanquished as a violation contrary to all right, and be judged from this standpoint. Only treaties which have been concluded by parties with equal rights, and of their own free will and free conviction, can claim from both partners the same lasting and sacred respect.

By the restoration of her sovereignty in her own Reich territory Germany has only now created the pre-condition for concluding such genuine treaties. For this purpose and on this pre-condition, the German Government for their part have presented their familiar proposals, and still abide by them.

3. The proposal for a draft treaty which was communicated to the German Government by the British Secretary of State, Mr. Eden, however, lacks all pre-conditions for the successful organization of a

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

truly lasting peace, since it is based, in the first place, on a fresh discrimination, intolerable for a great nation, and on a repetition of the attempt, which has been made from the start to lay down Germany's inequality of rights with the other States.

If the Reich German Government were to express their agreement to this proposal they would share the responsibility for its inevitable results, namely, a continued inner rejection of the humiliating subjection imposed upon the German people under such conditions.

The German Government will, however, not do this.

For all historical experience shows that it is impossible to bring about on such a basis a real and lasting peace, which is such because it is concluded of their own free will and with equal rights, and is thus respected by all parties. The Reich German Government must therefore reject all those provisions of the proposal of the Locarno Powers which are liable once more to infringe the honour of the nation or to bring into question or do away with its equality of rights.

4. The German Government and the German people have the most profound desire to make an important contribution to the peace of Europe after the restoration of the full independence and sovereignty of the Reich. They are further convinced that all attempts to bring about an improvement in the social condition of the peoples of Europe by means of economic conferences will be in vain until it has become possible to give to the European peoples and to their political and economic leaders the feeling of unconditional and lasting security. This security can, however, only be provided by a firm peace which is guaranteed for a long period.

The German Government do not disguise the fact that they themselves set more value upon this peace, as one of the surest bases for a revival of the prosperity of the peoples, than on any assistance, support, or relief, etc., which may be negotiated by means of economic conferences.

Acting on this conviction, the German Government have presented their proposals for international discussion. If, therefore, they are compelled to reject the proposal for a draft treaty presented to them by the Locarno Powers on all those points which affect the honour and equal rights of the German nation, they believe, nevertheless, recognizing their co-responsibility for the fate of the European peoples, that they must comply with the suggestions of His Britannic Majesty's Government in order, for their part, by presenting any possible new proposals, to contribute to a solution of this European question. For this reason the German Government do not wish in this document to go into details of the points rejected by them, but would like to reserve this procedure in order to bring this rejection of theirs into connection with a new and detailed proposal for overcoming the European crisis, which they are resolved to work out. They will present this to His

Britannic Majesty's Government with the sincere wish that the latter may then succeed in finding in it a basis for initiating those negotiations which are to bring peace to the European peoples and fructify anew their economic and social life.

In consideration of these facts the German Government are bound to inform His Britannic Majesty's Government that, since in this week they are making the final preparations for their elections,<sup>4</sup> they are, in purely technical respects, not now in the position to draw up so extensive a document and one requiring so much profound consideration. They consider it necessary, moreover, to send Ambassador von Ribbentrop to London once more on Tuesday, March 24, for verbal clarification of certain important questions. The German Government will then present to His Britannic Majesty's Government their detailed views and their positive proposals on Tuesday, March 31.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Held on Mar. 29.

<sup>5</sup> This date originally read "Thursday, April 2"; it was amended (in Bülow's handwriting on the copy here used) to read as it does now.

## No. 208

6710/E508134-35

### *The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

Del. No. 9 of March 24

LONDON, March 25, 1936—1:30 a.m.

Received March 25—3:10 a.m.

II R 749.

I called on Eden today<sup>1</sup> and handed him the German Memorandum.<sup>2</sup> I then had a friendly conversation with him and Lord Cranborne.<sup>3</sup> After Eden had read the text, I set forth the German point of view in detail, as agreed with the Führer and the Foreign Minister,<sup>4</sup> and drew special attention to the fact that any limitation of German sovereignty was definitively rejected in the Memorandum. I then stressed how desirable it was that the constructive plan that was to come should be discussed amongst the Locarno Powers in a quiet atmosphere, i.e., after the French elections.<sup>5</sup> At the same time I pointed out the necessity of our jointly exerting influence to calm the French and I put forward for discussion the possibility of postponing the negotiations and of summoning a conference in London for the middle of May.

<sup>1</sup> Ribbentrop arrived in London by air on the afternoon of Mar. 24.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 207.

<sup>3</sup> Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>4</sup> No record of Ribbentrop's discussions with Hitler or Neurath has been found.

<sup>5</sup> Held on Apr. 26 and May 3.



Eden took note of our rejection of the proposal about zones, of the appeal to the Hague Court and of any Rhineland statute. He seemed to appreciate the necessity of gaining time to permit the atmosphere to become calmer, and asked me to come and have another conversation with him tomorrow afternoon, after the British Cabinet meeting. He said he would be seeing Paul-Boncour tomorrow morning before the latter left for Paris, and that he would transmit copies of our Memorandum to the French, Belgian and Italian Governments, to which I agreed.

During our conversation Eden again returned to the question of whether he could not be given some contribution from the German side for the interim period, during the negotiations, and asked whether we could not renounce the construction of fortifications in the Rhineland at least for the period of the negotiations. Such a concession would make his tactics *vis-à-vis* the French very much easier. Drawing his attention to the reinforcement of the French frontier army and to the existence of the Maginot Line, I refused any further concessions and stressed that the German battalions must at least be able to construct fieldworks. Moreover, permanent fortifications could not be constructed in a few months. I requested Eden to refute the grotesque argument that French security was threatened and to use his influence to bring about the gradual withdrawal of French reinforcements. The Führer would, of course, keep his word not to increase the German troops during a limited phase of negotiations.<sup>6</sup> The security of a country, however, took . . . (group mutilated),<sup>7</sup> and a further reinforcement of the French troops would, perhaps, create a new situation. At the close of our conversation, I again pointed out to Eden that the British, the German and even the French people all wanted peace and the consolidation of Europe, and with this Eden heartily agreed. I emphasized that if the British Government jointly with ourselves exercised all their influence on the French Government to this end, successful negotiations would doubtless come about once the elections were over.

Your attention is drawn to my exhaustive telephone conversation with the Führer today.<sup>8</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>6</sup> See document No. 84.

<sup>7</sup> The draft in the Delegation's files (6432/E480498-500) here reads: "... took precedence over all else . . ."

<sup>8</sup> No record of this telephone conversation has been found.



## No. 209

6710/E508202-03

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, March 25, 1936.

RM 270.

II R 769.

Yesterday at midday I informed the Italian Ambassador in broad outline of the contents of our interim reply to London.<sup>1</sup> Signor Attolico thanked me for this and said that he intended to transmit this information to Rome at once.

I then asked him whether he knew any details about the instructions given to Grandi. He replied in the negative, merely saying that Italy would not take part in any measures of sanctions against us.

The Ambassador then mentioned a passage from the speech of the Führer's Deputy of March 23,<sup>2</sup> in which Herr Hess had pointed out how absurd it was to wish to use, as police against Germany, troops from, of all places, the very country which had only recently been condemned by the League of Nations as a treaty breaker and an aggressor.

I told Signor Attolico that this remark had, after all, only been a reflection on the procedure of the League of Nations and not on the Italians, and this in the end he appeared to recognize.

Finally, the Ambassador also complained of the fact that there was at present being made in the Wendelstein district a film based on the novel by Count Bossi-Fedrigotti.<sup>3</sup> Count Bossi, he said, was an Italian renegade and his novel had an anti-Italian bias. The Ambassador's chief objection was that, according to a *Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro* report of March 19, German troops were taking part in the making of this film.

I told the Ambassador that I knew nothing whatsoever about this matter. I was not familiar with Count Bossi's novel, nor, in consequence, did I know whether he was right in supposing that film sequences displeasing to Italy were being shot. In any case the Propaganda Ministry was the competent authority.<sup>4</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 207.

<sup>2</sup> Delivered at Cassel; for an account of this speech see *The Times* of Mar. 25, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> The reference is to the novel *Standeschütze Bruggler* by Count Anton Bossi-Fedrigotti. A DNB release of Mar. 19 (8969/E629663-64) gave an account of the shooting of this film, on Tyrolese exploits, by UFA in the Wendelstein mountains, with the participation of German mountain troops.

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum of Mar. 26 (8969/E629662) Bülow recorded that Attolico had informed him that he had now written to Goebbels; he also requested a statement that the Reich War Minister had not given permission for or approved the cooperation of the army in making the film. Further documents on this topic have been filmed on Serial 8969.

## No. 210

6710/E508203

*The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 63 of March 25

BERNE, March 25, 1936—4:30 p.m.

Received March 25—7:10 p.m.

II R 796.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 37,<sup>1</sup> 39<sup>2</sup> and 40.<sup>3</sup>

Federal Counsellor Motta, whom I saw today before he began his Easter holiday, views the general situation calmly. He is confident that, by gaining time, further progress will be made. He showed understanding for the negative portion of the German assessment of the London Locarno resolutions. In particular he does not wish to see Germany's return to the League of Nations treated as a prize for future proofs of good behaviour. Motta is wondering with astonishment why States members of the League of Nations who are not parties to Locarno, e.g., Switzerland, should commit themselves on behalf of the four Locarno Powers. Motta has approved the participation of Paravicini, the Swiss Minister, in the neutrals' London discussions, but has instructed him to maintain extreme reserve. But he wants Switzerland to appear even more neutral than these so-called neutrals and, if necessary, to act accordingly.

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 176.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 179 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 200.

## No. 211

6710/E508204-08

*The Head of the German Delegation in London  
to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

Delegation No. 11  
of March 25

LONDON, March 25, 1936—9:00 p.m.

Received March 26—2:10 a.m.

II R 771.

Eden asked me to come and see him at 3 p.m. today at the House of Commons. He opened the conversation by remarking that he was looking for a fresh occasion [*Moment*] to ease Britain's position *vis-à-vis* France. Britain had, after all, obligations towards France under the Locarno Treaty. And in any case the British Government had agreed

to the proposals of the Locarno Powers of last Thursday.<sup>1</sup> At this morning's Cabinet meeting the question was discussed as to what contribution could be made, by both the German and the British side, towards persuading the French to agree to definitive and constructive negotiations. Two points, he said, had been discussed. Firstly, the question as to whether, in accordance with paragraph III (2) of the document of the Locarno Powers, Britain should now enter into General Staff talks, and secondly, the question as to whether Germany could not, after all, promise that for a month or two, till the negotiations were concluded, she would not alter the *status quo* in the Rhineland—that is, whether Germany could not state that she was prepared, in addition to the undertaking she had already given not to increase the strength of her forces in the Rhineland,<sup>2</sup> to renounce fortifications during this period as well.

In France, he said, lively anxiety had arisen as to whether Eden would keep his pledged word. He was wondering what he could say tomorrow in the House of Commons. In this connection he would be grateful to be informed by the German Government whether he might tell the House of Commons tomorrow that Germany was in agreement with the opening of General Staff talks in accordance with III (2) of the Locarno Powers' document.

I replied that, without wishing to prejudice the attitude which my Government might adopt, I myself was utterly opposed to such a proposal. Even at my first cursory examination of the document in question, it had seemed to me grotesque that France should assert that she felt herself menaced by the re-establishment of German sovereignty in the Rhineland. On the one side there was, after all, only a peacetime garrison of 19 battalions, without fortifications of any sort, whilst on the French side stood an army which had been reinforced many times over and which disposed of a belt of fortifications which must remain impregnable to even the strongest assailant. In view of this situation it was perfectly obvious who was really menaced. And now for the one Power, which alone was in a position to constitute a menace, to declare into the bargain that Staff talks with Britain were essential to her security was in all respects grotesque. Further, it seemed to me that, in principle, bilateral General Staff agreements would most seriously prejudice beforehand the prospects of subsequent multilateral agreements. Indeed, such [bilateral] agreements would actually tempt certain French circles to prevent a general settlement.

Eden replied that Britain had, after all, to a certain extent made promises to France. In this connection Eden made the interesting admission that the whole of the agreements between the Locarno Powers had been made much too quickly and in a disturbed atmosphere. He

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 84 and 85.

then returned once more to his point that some means must be found of persuading France to negotiate in the intervening period. Since in respect of the interim period Germany could give him no further promises, the Cabinet had sought a way out through the medium of a British contribution.

*After I had repeatedly made it absolutely clear that in my view it was quite impossible for the German Government and indeed the whole German nation to entertain the suggestion of making a statement approving of Franco-British General Staff agreements in the given circumstances, Eden said that in that case, of course, he would insist no further on such a German promise.*<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the question of whether Germany could, during the interim period, forgo the construction of fortifications, I told Eden that I had already answered this question in the negative yesterday evening;<sup>4</sup> and I once again emphasized that we could not be expected to leave our troops in the Rhineland unprotected. In any case, I added, fortifications could obviously not be conjured up overnight.

Summing up, I asked Eden whether I might be permitted to give him quite frankly my own personal opinion about the whole situation, which he earnestly begged me to do. I may here add that the whole conversation was conducted in the most friendly manner. Eden's questions, I said, seemed to me to show that he was still seeking some momentary expedient [*Augenblicksmittel*] to get the French to the conference table. In my own opinion, however, and from my knowledge of the French mentality, any concessions which Britain might make to France at the moment would be completely pointless.<sup>5</sup> The first essential was that the atmosphere in France should calm down, and in this connection I repeated the suggestion I had made yesterday about postponing the negotiations until after the excitements of the election period were over.<sup>4</sup> Eden promised to consider this question.

I then said that, in my personal view, the British position in the current negotiations was more or less as follows: The legal question of who had broken the Locarno Treaty.<sup>6</sup> We were convinced that the French had broken it, whilst they took the opposite view. It was, therefore, debatable whether any British obligation of assistance in

<sup>3</sup> The draft (heavily revised in Ribbentrop's hand) of this telegram in the Delegation's files (6432/E480502-10) contained two further sentences at this point, which were deleted before despatch. They read: "I remarked that I naturally did not wish to prejudice the attitude of the German Government and would communicate Eden's request to them. Eden, however, did not insist any more on this point."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 208.

<sup>5</sup> The draft (see footnote 3 above) here contained a further sentence reading: "Unfortunately Germany had no further concessions to offer, as we had at the very beginning made all the contributions we could towards a solution of the question". This was deleted before despatch.

<sup>6</sup> In the draft (see footnote 3 above) this sentence originally read: "The legal question of who had broken the Locarno Treaty was at least disputable"; the last four words were deleted before despatch.



fact existed. But even if it were assumed that Germany was to blame, yet, since the pre-conditions for rendering military aid to France did not exist, it could not be disputed that Britain could herself decide independently in what form she should fulfil her obligation of assistance. The French desire for support was at present being expressed in a demand for enhanced security. Coercive measures against Germany would be pointless and would not achieve the object which the French desired, namely, an improvement in their situation. If, therefore, Britain were to draw the only wise, practical and logical conclusion with regard to her obligation to assist France, then this conclusion must be to ensure for France an enhanced measure of security by concluding the envisaged mutual aid agreement between the Locarno Powers, including the air convention. *That in turn would require Britain to get France to the conference table as quickly as possible to discuss the Führer's constructive peace plan.* This would best serve France's own interests, and would further provide the pre-conditions for that real pacification of Europe which France too must surely desire, and which Eden again confirmed to be Britain's objective. I went on to say that, in this way, Britain would be able to fulfil her obligation to render aid in the most ideal manner. Britain, I said, must tell France frankly that she could give an enhanced guarantee only within the framework of a general solution which also embraced Belgium, Italy and Germany, and that it would therefore be expedient, for France too, to recognize German sovereignty over the Rhineland, whilst at the same time it would be possible to negotiate about certain strictly reciprocal arrangements [*Vorkehrungen*] . . . (group mutilated)<sup>7</sup> desired for the transitional period, as proof of the peaceful intentions of both sides.<sup>8</sup>

My statements appeared to impress Eden.<sup>9</sup> He told me again how difficult was the position in which he had found himself since March 7. He must say, he continued, that Britain had agreed to a document which, as he again admitted, had perhaps been somewhat hastily formulated. For the rest, he said he would do his best to disentangle the situation and he asked me to remain a few days longer in London, so that he could get in touch with me again.

At the end of our conversation I turned once more to the subject of our proposals, which were to be expected on March 31, and I told Eden<sup>10</sup> that in my opinion there was not the slightest reason for him to

<sup>7</sup> The draft (see footnote 3 above) here reads: ". . . which might be desired . . ."

<sup>8</sup> A further sentence reading: "Moreover Britain must tell France that she could fulfil her obligation to render aid only within the framework of negotiations on the concrete German proposals" was deleted from the draft (see footnote 3 above) before despatch.

<sup>9</sup> At this point the words "to a certain extent" were deleted from the draft (see footnote 3 above) before despatch.

<sup>10</sup> In the draft (see footnote 3 above) this passage reads: ". . . and I told Eden that the opening of Franco-British General Staff conversations would be a unilateral step fraught with serious consequences. In my opinion there was . . ." The intervening words were deleted before despatch.

commit himself [*festzulegen*] to the French. It would be best first to await the German proposals<sup>11</sup> and then to postpone the negotiations which their study would involve, preferably until after the French elections.

Finally I again pointed out to Eden, with all the emphasis at my command, that to accept such one-sided [*einseitige*] Anglo-French General Staff talks would be a step fraught with dangerous consequences.

Prime Minister Baldwin has invited me to breakfast at nine o'clock tomorrow morning at Downing Street. I shall take this opportunity of stating once more how very grave a view we should take of one-sided General Staff talks.<sup>12</sup>

RIBBENTROP

<sup>11</sup> From this point onwards the draft (see footnote 3 above) is in Ribbentrop's handwriting.

<sup>12</sup> Marginal note on another copy (3242/712505-10) of the document here printed: "I have spoken to Phipps and confirmed to him that no further concessions are to be made during the transitional period, that assent to the General Staff talks is out of the question and that we could not accept any limitations on the construction of fortifications either. v. N[eurath], Mar. 26."

## No. 212

6710/E508212-14

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 55 of March 25

LONDON, March 25, 1936.

Received March 26—8:00 a.m.

II R 773.

With reference to my report A 1275 of March 21.<sup>1</sup>

Public opinion here is developing further along the lines which I described in detail in my report under reference. That is to say, it has been hardening more and more against the outcome of the consultations between the four Locarno Powers and is becoming increasingly opposed to any one-sided [*einseitige*] military commitments on the part of Britain *vis-à-vis* France and Belgium.

This pressure of public opinion accounts for the statements made the day before yesterday by Eden in the House of Commons<sup>2</sup> and by Lord Halifax at Bristol,<sup>3</sup> in which they both said that the resolutions of the Locarno Powers<sup>4</sup> represented nothing more than proposals and did not preclude the possibility of German counter-proposals. It is not too much to say that the reaction of public opinion bears a certain resemblance to the surge of emotion which swept over the British people last

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 178.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of Eden's statement of Mar. 23 see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, col. 859.

<sup>3</sup> Lord Halifax, deputizing for Mr. Eden, spoke at Bristol on Mar. 23; for an account of his speech see *The Times* of Mar. 24, 1936. The Embassy in London reported on the reception accorded the speech in despatch A 1311 of Mar. 24 (6710/E508216-17).

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

December when the Laval-Hoare plan for the settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict became known. Nevertheless, it would be wrong to count on this attitude on the part of public opinion, which has so far been so favourable towards us, as a dependable factor in our calculations. Even today it is noticeable that forces are at work to counteract this movement of public opinion towards a frankly pro-German attitude. Whereas during the last few days the familiar opposition to the new Germany and to certain basic principles of her internal policy had receded into the background in comparison with the great international issues, it is now apparent that efforts are being made in a variety of directions to resuscitate this opposition. It is clear that the Opposition are at pains to present their resistance to the idea of military commitments not as a pro-German attitude, but rather as an abstract confession of faith in collective security and against the system of military alliances. Various pronouncements on the Jewish question, such as Winston Churchill's outburst yesterday in the House of Commons<sup>5</sup> and the occasional references to the Thälmann case,<sup>6</sup> show that the anti-German forces are endeavouring to attack public opinion at a very vulnerable spot.

The extremely difficult position in which the British Government find themselves, between pressure from France on the one side and that of public opinion on the other, is beginning to cause the many thoughtful Britons serious concern. The reply brought here yesterday by Ambassador von Ribbentrop,<sup>7</sup> has, it is true, alleviated this anxiety to a certain extent in as much as it did not contain a flat rejection and held out some hopeful prospects for the future. It did not, however, relieve the anxiety that is felt over the question of how to get through the present precarious interim period. The fact that, according to reports in the newspapers, the French are pressing for an immediate start to the General Staff talks, is increasing the disquiet still further.

Finally, well-informed circles are also taking into account the fact that the French have already suffered a rebuff over the great majority of the claims and wishes which they succeeded in getting accepted at the Four Power discussions, and that this may well result in strong anti-British feeling in France, such as has already been voiced in the French press.

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<sup>5</sup> For the text of this speech of Mar. 24, during the course of which Churchill spoke of "the Jewish race in a great country . . . being subjected to most horrible, cold, scientific persecution", see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1111-1116.

<sup>6</sup> Ernst Thälmann, German Communist leader. Documents, including reports from the Embassy in London, concerning protests against Thälmann's imprisonment without trial in Germany, and about tentative preparations for Thälmann's trial, have been filmed on Serial K 2215. A letter from several Labour M.P.s about Thälmann appeared in the *Manchester Guardian* on Mar. 24, 1936, the relevant cutting being forwarded with the Embassy's report A 1353 of Mar. 25 (K2215/K604214-15), in which it was also stated that the Embassy continued to receive numerous telegrams and protests about Thälmann every day.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 207.



In fact, the position is that, for one thing, the absence of Italian agreement has already robbed the whole structure elaborated by the four Locarno Powers of the nature of a resolution and has turned it into a simple project, which is at present not legally binding on any of the parties. In addition, a good third of the whole project has gone overboard, at least for the time being, by reason of the adjournment of the Council of the League of Nations.<sup>8</sup> The concessions demanded of Germany were first stripped of their categorical nature by the British Government and were then wrecked by German opposition. Finally, as far as the remnants of the project are concerned, British public opinion is already campaigning, and the British Parliament is preparing to campaign, against the one-sided military commitments. Thus in fact, not much remains of that achievement which Flandin took home with him from London and which was so warmly welcomed in France.

France's resounding failure, both within the Locarno circle and in the Council of the League of Nations, is beginning to cause grave and widespread anxiety here. Uneasiness is felt over the possibility that the Anglo-French rift may widen. France is known to take such failures ill and there are fears for the future of the collective system of safeguarding peace. On the other hand, no one doubts that the French Government will most determinedly insist on the promises given by Britain with regard to future military commitments being fulfilled. In these circumstances people shrink from allowing further inflammable material to be introduced into Anglo-French relations.

For all these reasons we must be prepared to see public opinion become more and more restrained in its inclination to sympathize with the German view and, furthermore, to find criticism of the German action becoming more articulate again.

HOESCH

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<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 277 and document No. 201, footnote 5.

## No. 213

5731/E415784-85

### *Memorandum by an Official of Department III*

BERLIN, March 25, 1936.

[zu] III E 1140.<sup>1</sup>

The Commercial Counsellor of the South African Legation, Mr. Bosman, today took advantage of a discussion of certain minor economic matters to tell me the following, apparently on the instructions of Minister Gie:<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> III E 1140 was the registry number given to Dieckhoff's memorandum of Mar. 30 which is cited in footnote 6 below.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. S. F. N. Gie, South African Minister in Berlin.



We were aware, he said, of how great was the extent to which the South African Government had tried to exert a moderating influence on the British Government with a view to obtaining recognition of German aspirations. He could also refer to the recent speeches by General Smuts,<sup>3</sup> in which the latter had done justice to the German point of view. Indeed, Minister Gie, as he (Bosman) could assure me, had in his reports to Pretoria always, and especially of late, presented the German situation and our intentions in a light which was both fair and also *favourable* to Germany.

Mr. Bosman then asked whether I could tell him anything about the contents of the German counter-proposals in reply to the Memorandum of the Locarno Powers, to which I replied in the negative. He mentioned a conversation which Minister Gie had recently had with the State Secretary,<sup>4</sup> stressed the influence which the Governments of the Dominions, and in particular the views of General Hertzog<sup>5</sup> and General Smuts, had with the British Government and said that Minister Gie would gladly place himself at our disposal, if, as the situation developed further, we thought that information given to him in confidence might enable his Government, at an appropriate moment, to urge upon the British Government the desirability of giving due regard to the German views on the Memorandum of the Locarno Powers. Mr. Bosman mentioned that, of course, Minister Gie was acting on his own initiative in this matter, and was not in contact with the British Embassy here.

He hinted that Mr. Gie would much welcome it if the State Secretary were to receive him again in order to discuss these questions with him.

Respectfully submitted to Minister Prüfer.<sup>6</sup>

RÜTER<sup>7</sup>

<sup>3</sup> General J. C. Smuts, South African Minister of Justice. In a speech at Grote Schuur on Mar. 22, Smuts called for consideration of the German proposals and co-operation in the achievement of peace in Europe (see *The Times* of Mar. 23, 1936).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 118.

<sup>5</sup> Prime Minister and Minister for External Affairs.

<sup>6</sup> This memorandum has the following typewritten addition (5731/E415785-86): "That Gie quite appreciates Germany's position and is in general sympathetic towards Germany has become plain to me in the course of a number of conversations with him. It is therefore very probable that he has reported home in favourable terms and that he may thereby perhaps have contributed to a certain extent to the sympathetic attitude which the South African Government have adopted towards us. I would therefore recommend that Mr. Gie continue to be treated with as much friendliness as possible. Herewith respectfully submitted to the State Secretary. Prüfer, Berlin, Mar. 25, 1936."

<sup>7</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "*Mediation* by Gie is out of the question. At the most [*Allenfalls*] he could be kept *au courant* for his *information*. Perhaps M[inisterial] D[irektor] Dieckhoff could receive him after his return [from London] and tell him something of his impressions. B[ülow], Mar. 26." (2) "To be submitted to M[inisterial] D[irektor] Dieckhoff. Pr[üfer], Mar. 26." (3) "Today at 12 o'clock. D[ieckhoff], Mar. 30." In a memorandum of Mar. 30 (M320/M013334) Dieckhoff recorded that he had that day informed Gie briefly about the impressions he had gained in London and had made it plain he was informing Gie merely as a friendly Minister of whose interest in the matter the Germans were aware.

## No. 214

6710/E508223-34

*Memorandum by an Official of Department II*

BERLIN, March 25, 1936.

II R 780.

The attitude adopted, as far as can be ascertained at present, by the Powers over the question of participation in possible sanctions against Germany.

Position as of March 24, 1936.

## Contents:

- I. Countries which may be expected to participate in sanctions.  
(France, Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Russia.)
- II. Countries whose attitude cannot be predicted with certainty.  
(Great Britain, Belgium, Italy, Poland.)
- III. Countries which may be expected not to participate in sanctions.  
(United States, Brazil, Japan;  
Hungary, Bulgaria, Austria, Turkey;  
Switzerland, Netherlands, Denmark, Sweden, Norway;  
Yugoslavia;  
Iraq;  
Chile, Ecuador, Peru, Uruguay, probably also Argentina, Union  
of South Africa, Greece, Iran, China.)

An attempt is made below, based on information available here, to give an account of the attitude which the different Powers may be expected to adopt in the event of a resolution being taken to impose sanctions on Germany. Whether such a resolution can be taken under international law and if so, on the strength of what provisions, falls outside the scope of this memorandum. Where sanctions are referred to below, this always means economic and financial measures, since, apart from the original wave of indignation in France, there has so far nowhere been any serious question of military sanctions against Germany.

## I

The question of sanctions is, naturally, receiving most attention in France. Immediately after March 7 the Government studied the practical possibilities with regard to sanctions. In this connection the possibility of abrogating the clearing treaties<sup>1</sup> came first to mind.

<sup>1</sup> Franco-German clearing arrangements had been governed by the Franco-German clearing agreement and exchange of notes of July 28, 1934 (9631/E679218-73), as modified by agreements and exchanges of notes of Nov. 30, 1934 (9631/E679274-314). These agreements were renewed until July 31, 1935 (9631/E679315-24; 454-57). Following their expiry, clearing arrangements were conducted in accordance with provisions agreed upon between the *Deutsche Verrechnungskasse* and the *Office Franco-Allemand des Paiements Commerciaux* and based on the agreements of Nov. 30, 1934 (M301/M012872-77). A Foreign Ministry Circular of July 31, 1935 (8214/E583581-85) stated that the new arrangements had in practice made very little change.

Later on, in consideration of the fact that Germany's import potential was primarily dependent on her exports, the idea of strangling German exports to those countries which would participate in sanctions came to the fore. Apart from this, the issue of an export embargo on Minette [iron] ores was also considered. All these measures, however, have so far merely been discussed and at present the only practical economic result of the events of March 7 to be seen is in a slackening in the sale of German goods on the French market.<sup>2</sup> Further developments will depend upon the general policy which the French Government decide to pursue. In any case one cannot speak of any widespread enthusiasm for sanctions pure and simple, even in France. For one thing France's negative attitude towards the imposition of sanctions in Italy's case does not make it altogether easy for her to change her tune; nor must one lose sight of those elements which incline towards an understanding and which oppose sanctions because of the intensification of the conflict with Germany which such sanctions would entail. But above all, the more time elapses the clearer it becomes how hard it would be to get enough countries to collaborate to make the imposition of sanctions on Germany effective. All these factors are combining to damp the ardour for sanctions.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, mention must also be made of the plans propagated recently by certain industrial circles, to apply particular measures of economic coercion against Germany (freight embargo on German boats, removal of militarily important raw materials from the clearing system and the like).<sup>4</sup>

Apart from France, it is above all *Czechoslovakia* who is most likely to support sanctions against Germany. These endeavours are admittedly contrary to the official pronouncements made in Prague,<sup>5</sup> and contrary, too, to the economic interests of the country,<sup>6</sup> but nevertheless they admit of no doubt.

In *Rumania*, too, opinion is such that, should occasion arise, she may be expected to participate in sanctions under the dual pressure of France and Russia.

That *Soviet Russia* is one of the countries which will help to fulfil a possible French desire for sanctions may be taken for granted. The Russian Government, moreover, have already taken one step in this direction by instructing their Delegation, a few hours after the German action of March 7, not to sign the German-Russian economic treaty for 1936, which had been agreed save for a few minor points, until further

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<sup>2</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires in Paris had reported on the fall in the sale of German goods in France in despatch A 1306 of Mar. 20 (6710/E507936-37).

<sup>3</sup> Forster had reported on the sanctions question in despatch A 1305 of Mar. 19 (6710/E507900-01), with which he enclosed newspaper cuttings giving French views about sanctions (6710/E507902-34). Cuttings on this subject had also been forwarded with the Paris Embassy's despatch A 1202 of Mar. 14 (6710/E507191-212).

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 92.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 148 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 120.



notice.<sup>7</sup> As a result there has already been a considerable hold-up in the flow of Russian raw materials to Germany.<sup>8</sup>

## II

While Russia's attitude has been considerably influenced by Paris, it is probably not so much France as *Britain* who has had a decisive influence on *Belgium*. Since *Spain*, too, has instructed her Delegation in London to follow the British line,<sup>9</sup> the importance attaching to the British attitude becomes abundantly plain. In the sanctions question too the British attitude is, in a sense, the factor which tips the scales. The only thing that can be said about Britain's attitude is that the idea of sanctions against Germany is not attractive either to the British leaders, or, more particularly, to public opinion, but from this fact one cannot predict their decision which will depend on future developments.

Nor is *Italy's* attitude quite certain either. Whilst on the one hand we have the quite unambiguous declarations of those in authority against Italian participation in sanctions—"sanzionati non sanziano altri"<sup>10</sup> [those on whom sanctions have been imposed do not impose sanctions on others]—yet on the other hand it should not be forgotten that, in view of the Abyssinian conflict, Italy will keep open all possibilities. All the same there would appear to be more probability that Italy will not take part in sanctions than that she will.

Finally *Poland* too must be numbered amongst the not altogether predictable factors. She is in a difficult position, because she has to reconcile her alliance obligations towards France with the maintenance of good neighbourly relations with Germany. Nevertheless, in the sanctions question Poland will hardly constitute a serious threat to us, at least not unless our opponents give her very far-reaching promises in order to win her cooperation.

<sup>7</sup> For the negotiations on the Russo-German Economic Treaty of 1936 see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 530. For the Treaty as eventually signed on Apr. 29, 1936, see the present vol., document No. 302. A DNB bulletin of Mar. 25 (6690/H097990) cited a Havas report from London dated Mar. 24 to the effect that the Soviet Foreign Trade Commissariat had broken off negotiations, begun on German initiative, for a thousand million mark credit to finance Soviet orders in Germany on account of the German violation of the Locarno Treaty and reoccupation of the demilitarized Rhineland. By telegram No. 35 of Mar. 25 (6690/H097988-89), Roediger instructed the Embassy in Moscow to report on this, which Tippleskirsch did in despatch D 388 of Mar. 30 (6690/H097991-93); he stated that no such report had appeared in the Soviet press; that the Press Department of the Foreign Affairs Commissariat claimed to have told American correspondents that no such negotiations had been pending, and that no Soviet *démenti* would be issued.

<sup>8</sup> The major portion of the files on German-Russian economic relations for this period are not held and no documentation on this point has been found.

<sup>9</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires in Madrid reported to this effect in telegram No. 40 of Mar. 18 (6710/E507405).

<sup>10</sup> These words were used by Mussolini at his interview with Hassell on Mar. 9; see document No. 41.



## III

Over against the above-mentioned States there stand a number of other Powers of whom it is clear even at this stage that they would not take part in sanctions against Germany.

Firstly, those States are of this number who are not members of the League of Nations and who have also hitherto been opposed to sanctions, e.g., *Japan, the United States and Brazil*.

Then there are our former allies, *Hungary and Bulgaria*, and probably also *Austria and Turkey*. Admittedly the reservation must here be made that Italy's attitude will influence Austria and perhaps also Hungary, just as Turkey must have regard to the attitude of Russia.

A third group is constituted by the neutrals. Our diplomatic representatives have already received assurances from authoritative quarters in *Switzerland*<sup>11</sup> and the *Netherlands*<sup>12</sup> that these countries will not take part in sanctions. The *Swedish* Foreign Minister,<sup>13</sup> too, has made an explicit statement to the same effect. The best pointer to the attitude of the other *Scandinavian* countries is given, apart from information from other sources, by the activities of the *Danish* Foreign Minister, Munch, in London, who has endeavoured to act as mediator:<sup>14</sup> the Scandinavian Powers need not therefore be expected to take part in sanctions against Germany.

The *Yugoslav* Minister President has also declared against participation in sanctions,<sup>15</sup> and this declaration is in harmony with the attitude hitherto adopted by his country. From *Iraq*, we have a similar declaration made by the Minister President<sup>16</sup> to our Minister<sup>17</sup> there.

Another group of countries who will probably not be in favour of sanctions is in South America: apart from *Brazil* (mentioned above as not being a member of the League of Nations) both *Chile* and *Ecuador* have already made clear by their conduct in the Council of the League of Nations that they incline to our side. Moreover, declarations to this effect by these States are to hand.<sup>18</sup> *Argentina's* attitude is not quite so certain, although here, too, there can be no question of an inclination towards sanctions. *Peru* and *Uruguay* are both distinctly friendly in their attitude towards us.

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<sup>11</sup> See document No. 52.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 128.

<sup>13</sup> Rickard J. Sandler; see document No. 191, footnote 5.

<sup>14</sup> See documents Nos. 126 and 179.

<sup>15</sup> See documents Nos. 56 and 114.

<sup>16</sup> Yasin Pasha el Hashimi.

<sup>17</sup> The German Minister in Bagdad, Fritz Grobba, reported conversations with Yasin Pasha on the German action in the Rhineland and the possibility of sanctions being imposed on Germany in despatch No. 609 of Mar. 10 (6710/E507063-66) and telegram No. 8 of Mar. 15 (6710/E507049).

<sup>18</sup> See documents Nos. 140, 158, 159 and 181.

Under the heading of friendly, but not committed to opposing sanctions, the following countries can also be listed: *Greece, the Union of South Africa, Iran and China*. As far as these countries are concerned, it is improbable that they will take part in sanctions.

With regard to the other States, there is either no information available or what there is is so colourless as not to seem worth including.

To sum up, it can be said that the danger of economic sanctions against Germany need not at present be regarded as menacing. It would in any case be impossible to form a united sanctions front against us, as was done against Italy. On the other hand, it would not seem impossible that, circumstances permitting, some sanctions, limited both in scope and in the number of participants, might be imposed against Germany. Apart from France and Russia, and France's followers, the other Powers who, if it came to the worst, might possibly participate would, in the main, be the Locarno Powers.<sup>19</sup>

F[EINE]<sup>20</sup>

<sup>19</sup> A note (6710/E508235) attached to the document here printed shows that it was submitted by Renthe-Fink to the Foreign Minister, the State Secretary and Ministerialdirektor Gaus on Mar. 25; it was also distributed within the Foreign Ministry.

<sup>20</sup> Dr. Gerhardt Feine, an official of the German Legation at the Hague, had been called to Berlin for temporary duties in Department II.

## No. 215

9096/E639814

### *Minute by an Official of the Economic Department*

BERLIN, March 25, 1936.

e.o. W 3252.

At the desire of Ambassador Count von Welczeck, I called on State Secretary (retired) Trendelenburg yesterday. Herr von Lupin took part in this conversation at a later stage. I gave State Secretary Trendelenburg a copy of the Embassy's letter of March 16,<sup>1</sup> omitting the last paragraph, and I pointed out that the Embassy had undertaken no commitments at all to Señor Laiglesia. Herr Trendelenburg said that he had heard nothing of this either. I further expressed the Ambassador's wish that Señor Laiglesia should not be treated too brusquely in negotiation about his commission, and that if need be he should receive the commission which he had earned through actually bringing business. This too was agreed.

There were profound differences of opinion in the views taken of Laiglesia's character. Whereas the Ambassador considers that Señor Laiglesia has established valuable contacts with the competent Government Departments and that he might also perhaps again prove useful

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 133.

in future, the AGK spoke out very strongly against Señor Laiglesia and described him as simply a commission-hunter who had so far done nothing constructive.<sup>2</sup>

SABATH

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "I informed Ambassador Count v. W[elczeck] on Mar. 26. S[aba]th, Mar. 26."

## No. 216

6710/E508409-11

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

836 Po 1

BELGRADE, March 25, 1936.

Received March 30.

II R 866.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The repercussions of the German action of March 7 on Yugoslav foreign policy.

I have been keeping you currently informed about the attitude of public opinion and of the Government here to the German action of March 7 and to the subsequent political events which this has set in motion.<sup>1</sup> From the beginning the main tendency obviously was to keep out of this new conflict among the Great Powers as far as possible, and to support their French ally only in so far as seemed absolutely necessary to avoid seriously annoying France. On one point, however, there was complete determination from the start, namely, that having lost the Italian market, Yugoslavia must under no circumstances allow herself to be persuaded to jeopardize the German market as well by taking part in economic sanctions against Germany. It is certain that in these circumstances Yugoslavia will do her utmost in Paris and London to effect a *détente*, and it is only to be regretted that this inclination on the part of Yugoslavia should be constantly misrepresented by Titulescu as the spokesman of the Little Entente.

But whether the reserve which, for opportunist reasons, Yugoslavia is at present displaying, can be maintained will depend on the further development of the Franco-German conflict. For, if the conflict were to become more acute, Yugoslavia's vital interests might be so immediately affected that economic interests, no matter how obvious they might be, might yet, possibly, have to take second place. This may be clearly seen from a glance at the exigencies governing Yugoslavia's foreign policy.

Yugoslavia is a State which has been created by the Peace Treaties, and she is furthermore a State which urgently needs external peace for

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<sup>1</sup> For previous reports by Heeren see documents Nos. 56, 114 and 202.

its internal consolidation. From these two facts it follows that any political event in Europe which might lead to the disruption of the Peace Treaties and to the heightening of political tension amongst the Great Powers must at once give rise to anxiety here. If, as is here thought to have been the case with the German action of March 7, such an event at the same time serves to ease the situation, in terms of power politics, of Yugoslavia's hereditary enemy, Italy, then it is only understandable that anxiety is, in consequence, further increased. It is thought here that the first consequences of this easing of pressure on Italy, which represents a threat to Yugoslavia, may be discerned in the Italo-Albanian agreements<sup>2</sup> and in the consolidation of the Rome Three-Power Pact,<sup>3</sup> and the Yugoslavs are asking themselves with some anxiety whether the aggravation of the German-French tension may not lead to a new *rapprochement* between France and Italy at Yugoslavia's expense. For it has been previously found here that France does not hesitate to sacrifice the interests of her allies if her own interests should require this. However much understanding there is here for the German claim for equality of rights, and however far people are from taking seriously the French slogan of the German menace, the opinion nevertheless prevails here that Yugoslavia's foreign policy has been adversely affected by the German action. All hopes are therefore fixed on a peaceful settlement of the conflict and on a general pacification of Europe in the sense of the German proposals. But the intransigence of the French politicians and the security psychosis of the French people are too well known here to allow of any illusions concerning the prospects of such a real pacification of Europe. In any case such hopes for the future are today still completely overshadowed by an awareness of the immediate dangers to which a small country like Yugoslavia is exposed in any dispute among the Great Powers and, in particular, in a German-French dispute. It should, therefore, not occasion surprise if Yugoslavia, particularly in the near future, is very careful to avoid anything which might reduce the protection which the existing military alliances afford her.

V. HEEREN

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<sup>2</sup> Italo-Albanian economic agreements were signed on Mar. 19, 1936; for the texts see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXXIII, pp. 51-139.

<sup>3</sup> For the visit of the Austrian Federal Chancellor and the Hungarian Minister President to Rome and for the Protocols signed there on Mar. 23, see document No. 165 and footnote 3 thereto.



## No. 217

6680/H096409

*War Minister Blomberg to Foreign Minister Neurath*

W. Stb. 2688/36 geh.

BERLIN, March 25, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON NEURATH: I see from Ambassador Trautmann's telegrams of March 19 and 20,<sup>1</sup> in which he reports on his farewell visit to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek, that both the Ambassador and the Staff advisers hold views on the Klein plans which cannot meet with our approval. Now that the Führer and Chancellor has approved the Klein project and the conclusion of the credit agreement will take place within the next few days, it is absolutely essential that the Ambassador and the Staff advisers should further the matter by every possible means and should not, as previously, rouse Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's suspicions of Klein anew.

I have instructed General von Falkenhausen accordingly<sup>2</sup> and should be grateful if the Embassy in Nanking could be given equally firm instructions. It is now a matter of convincing all German and also all Chinese authorities of the great importance of the plan for the exchange of goods and of encouraging all the authorities to support its execution in every way. I would venture to request that the necessary action be taken speedily.<sup>3</sup>

Heil Hitler!

BLOMBERG

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., telegrams Nos. 52 and 54, see document No. 156 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter of even date (6680/H096411-12), of which a copy was enclosed with the document here printed.

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Marginal note by the Foreign Minister [on the original]: 'The matter has been settled by discussion with Col. Gen. von Blomberg. To be filed.'" See also document No. 235.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On March 25, 1936, the London Naval Conference ended with the signature by representatives of Britain, France and the United States of the Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament. For the text of this Treaty and the documents of the Conference, see *Documents of the London Naval Conference, 1935, December 1935-March 1936* (London: H.M. Stationery Office, 1936). The text of the Treaty has been filmed as 7559/E542031-72.]

## No. 218

3242/712511-12

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, March 26, 1936.

State Secretary Milch<sup>1</sup> telephoned me at midday today and told me that the two airmen who flew over Strasbourg<sup>2</sup> had been traced and were now on their way to Berlin for interrogation. The aircraft, he said, were sports models, bearing civilian markings, and the flight over French territory was, in itself, permissible as they had not gone near any forbidden zone. The low-level flying, on the other hand, was not permissible, but they had lost their way and had come down to 150 metres over Strasbourg in order to see the name of the railway station and thus discover their whereabouts. One of the airmen was a flying instructor and, therefore, a civilian, the other, as he [Milch] told me in strict confidence, was a lance-corporal. The latter would be discharged from the army at once and both men would be sent to a concentration camp for two years. Further, the head of the flying school from which the two men came would be dismissed, since it was clear that he had not inculcated strictly enough the ban on flying over the frontier. Milch said that he had agreed upon the above measures with Minister President Göring (by telephone). Moreover, it was proposed to regard subsequent cases of a similar nature as high treason. He [Milch] would call on the French Ambassador this afternoon, having already made an appointment, and inform him of the above. I immediately told Herr Milch that to visit the French Ambassador was out of the question, as the incident would thereby promptly turn into a diplomatic incident. Herr Milch protested that he had been expressly instructed by Minister Göring to call on the French Ambassador. To this I replied that, while I fully appreciated the chivalrous intention of the Minister President, I must nevertheless insist that the visit should not take place. To this Herr Milch agreed, with the reservation that he would try and contact Minister President Göring again by telephone. We further agreed that the Military Attaché in Paris<sup>3</sup> should be informed of the facts as ascertained in Germany and

<sup>1</sup> Erhard Milch, State Secretary of the Reich Air Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> According to a Havas report of Mar. 23, cited by DNB on Mar. 24 (M300/M012835) two German aeroplanes had flown low over Strasbourg on the morning of Mar. 23, evidently in order to take photographs. By letter of Mar. 25 (M300/M012836-37) Renthe-Fink requested the Reich Air Ministry to investigate this matter and stressed the need for avoiding frontier incidents. In a memorandum of Mar. 26 (M300/M012839-40), Schultz-Sponholz of Dept. II noted that he had been told, in strict confidence, in the Reich Air Ministry that the two aeroplanes, which had civilian markings, had carried machine-guns and bombing equipment.

<sup>3</sup> Lt. Gen. Kühlenthal; in a memorandum of Mar. 26 (M321/M013337-38) on this incident Kühlenthal noted that he had that day received instructions by telephone from

of the proposed punishments, so that he could communicate these in confidence to the military authorities there. Finally Herr Milch suggested, and I agreed, that it would be useful to inform our Air Attaché in London<sup>4</sup> too, so that the British should not gain a false impression about the incident, which had already been reported in the French press.

BÜLOW

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<sup>4</sup> Col. Wenniger; no record of any instructions to him on this matter has been found. Milch, and had passed on the information to the French Air Ministry. The text of an official statement to be published by the French press was transmitted to Berlin in the Paris Embassy's telegram No. 177 of Mar. 27 (M300/M012844-45).

## No. 219

6710/E508288

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 50 of March 26

ROME, March 26, 1936—6:50 p.m.

Received March 26—9:35 p.m.

II R 818.

I asked Suvich today whether the Italian reply, which Mussolini had told me was to be made on Monday,<sup>1</sup> had been communicated to the other Locarno Powers. Suvich answered that the reply had been sent to Grandi, but that, meantime, he had not communicated it because of the London adjournment.<sup>2</sup> The French, he said, were continually pressing the Italians for a reply, and this was understandable, since the alleged resolutions of the Locarno Powers<sup>3</sup> were in reality not even Four-Power proposals as long as Italy had not agreed to them. He asked what were our views on this situation to which I replied that, whilst the point of view which he had just set forth, namely, that the resolutions of the Locarno Powers were inoperative without Italy's participation, was in itself clear [*einleuchtend*] to me, yet on the other hand we would welcome a reply such as the one of which Mussolini had informed me, i.e., one rejecting coercive and exceptional measures. The tenor of my interview with Mussolini last Sunday had, as he knew, been to suggest that such a reply should be made. Suvich pointed out that events had meanwhile occurred which had somewhat altered the situation. The spirit of the reply remained unchanged, but there had as yet been no decision about the date on which it was to be communicated. He would report the substance of this conversation to Mussolini. He said that Grandi

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., Mar. 23. For Hassell's conversation with Mussolini on Mar. 22 see document No. 185.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the adjournment of the League Council, see Editors' Note, p. 227 and document No. 201, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19, see Editors' Note, p. 208.

himself was in any case no longer the proper channel now that the London discussions had ceased.

The approach to Italy and Abyssinia resolved upon by the Committee of Thirteen<sup>4</sup> had not so far been made, at least not to Italy. Madariaga<sup>5</sup> had spoken to Grandi, but the latter had stated that he was without instructions on the matter. Italy was in no hurry in this respect and was relying on the progress of operations in Africa.

HASSELL

<sup>4</sup> On Mar. 23 the Committee of Thirteen, meeting in London, adopted a resolution requesting its Chairman "to get into touch with the two parties [to the Italo-Abyssinian dispute] and to take such steps as may be called for in order that the Committee may be able, as soon as possible, to bring the two parties together and . . . to bring about the prompt cessation of hostilities and the final restoration of peace". (See League of Nations: *Official Journal*, April 1936, p. 398.)

<sup>5</sup> Salvador de Madariaga, Chairman of the Committee of Thirteen.

## No. 220

6695/H104755-57

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

TOP SECRET

PRAGUE, March 26, 1936.

A. III. 1 b 27

IV Ru. 1429.

Subject: Discussion about a Czech-Russian Military Alliance. Czechoslovakia refuses. Disquiet in London.

The Sudeten-German Party Deputy Kundt has given the following information to a member of this Legation, saying that it derived from the Sudeten-German Party Deputy Peters, a friend of Foreign Minister Krofta and a member of the latter's Masonic Lodge:

On Friday, March 6, that is to say a day before the Führer's speech in the Reichstag,<sup>1</sup> a discussion took place in Prague between State President Beneš, Foreign Minister Krofta, a number of senior General Staff officers and a Commissar or Soviet Russian officer who had come on purpose from Moscow, during which the Soviet Russian delegate put forward a military alliance between the USSR and the ČSR and proposed in particular that some cadres of the Russian air force should be transferred to Czechoslovakia already now. This offer was rejected by the Czechoslovak side.

In some manner unknown, a report that this discussion had taken place reached London. The British Government expressed their disapproval about it to the French Foreign Minister, Flandin. Flandin is said thereupon to have let Prague know that that sort of thing was at the present moment most undesirable since it furnished unwelcome grounds for the Führer's anxiety.

Thus far the information received. It links up with a report from

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.



another source which I reported by a special channel on March 14;<sup>2</sup> in some further details might perhaps fit into this context: for instance the fact that certain left-wing Czech papers, amongst which the semi-official *Lidové Noviny*, have of late adopted a critical tone *vis-à-vis* Russia such as had for weeks no longer been usual in this section of the press; furthermore, the following "categorical denial of the rumours concerning the use of Czechoslovak airfields by the Russians" which was today published as a Havas report from London:

"In order to put an end once and for all to the rumours that Czechoslovakia has authorized Soviet Russia to make use of all Czechoslovak military airfields, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Eden, today replied to questions put to him in the House, saying that the British Government had received from the Government of Czechoslovakia the categorical assurance that no agreement of this nature existed between Prague and Moscow.<sup>3</sup>

"(Note by the Czechoslovak Press Office: These rumours, which were disseminated some time ago by Hungarian propaganda in Geneva, were taken up by several English and French newspapers.)"

From this it would appear that Mr. Eden found it necessary to ask the Prague Government for an explanation; very definite reports to this effect from the other source which I mentioned have, moreover, also reached me.

Finally, the Latvian Minister here said today that M. Krofta had made a remark to him to the effect that Czechoslovakia must be careful not to let herself be taken in by the Soviets.

EISENLOHR

<sup>2</sup> No record of this report has been found.

<sup>3</sup> For Eden's statement see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, col. 1208.

## No. 221

4404/E083522-31

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

1006

MADRID, March 26, 1936.

Received March 31.

II Ib. 314 Sp.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The internal situation in Spain.

With reference to my despatch 703 of March 3<sup>1</sup> and my telegrams.<sup>2</sup>

The present situation in Spain leads one to ask what course develop-

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (4404/E083488-505); this despatch reported on the Spanish parliamentary elections which took place on Feb. 16 and Mar. 1, 1936, and resulted in the formation of a left-wing Government under Don Manuel Azaña.

<sup>2</sup> Völkers' telegrams Nos. 33 of Mar. 11, 37 of Mar. 14 and 43 of Mar. 23 are not printed (4404/E083506-07; 09).

ments will take. Although it is impossible to make any predictions some information on the distribution of forces and on trends may be in place.

*Distribution of forces: Strengthening of the Left.* At the last elections in Spain two groups of forces which were at that time almost equally powerful opposed each other: Right and Left. Between them lay the Freemason, democratic, centre section, whose left wing under Azaña and Martínez Barrio collaborated with Marxism. The balance of strength between the two chief opposing groups has meanwhile shifted in favour of the Left, as is shown below.

The purely numerical picture of the last elections shows an actual majority of 200,000 votes for the right-wing bloc. But, under the system of calculating majorities in force here, the result was a victory for the parties of the Left. In the period of about four weeks which has passed since the elections, the parties of the Left have increased their power through acts of violence and terror, have reinforced their position by taking over important offices and functions (Communist local administrations in the country), and have gained ground and influence.

*The Local Elections of April 12.* A new test of strength will be the impending local elections, which are set for April 12. It is to be assumed not only that the left-wing poll will be higher than on February 16 but, moreover, that the victorious red flags will attract even more followers on this occasion.

*Position of the Right.* The parties of the Right find themselves forced back on the defensive by the assault of the left-wing front with its complete disregard for parliamentary methods. In the first wave of panic at the red terror, right-wing supporters fled the country *en masse*; the political leaders, however, remained in their places. The organizations of the right-wing groups, whose party offices and printing presses were in many instances destroyed, have suffered. In parliament, which has meanwhile been opened, they have as yet been unable to make themselves felt; the debate on their interpellations concerning public safety has, at the Government's desire, already been postponed twice. In the commission for the investigation of parliamentary mandates they have been exposed to new intrigues by the Left, who are disputing the mandates of the right-wing leaders and would like to annul their election retroactively. The confidential talks between Azaña and several bourgeois politicians, which took place immediately after the elections for the purpose of reinsuring the Government's position in parliament, have been rendered pointless for the time being, since, in view of the seriousness of the situation, it may now be assumed that all the parties of the Right would today support a policy of the Azaña Government which was directed against Communism.

*Persecution of Fascists.* The Fascist Party "*Falange Española*" has been officially dissolved by the Government. Its leaders and a large number of its members have been arrested. The Government have made use of a few local attacks by young Fascists on Marxist leaders to proscribe the entire organization, and have repeatedly stated—probably at the instigation of the left-wing front—that all recent excesses committed by the mob were provoked by the Fascists. This attitude on the part of the Government has resulted in the persecution of Fascists throughout the country, in the course of which the crowds have often resorted to lynch law and have committed brutal atrocities.

In the last elections the Fascist Party was heavily defeated. Its leader, Primo de Rivera, obtained only 5,000 votes and was not re-elected. Politically, the party is at present completely excluded. It is now intent on reorganizing itself in secret, and it is indeed gaining supporters, especially from the Catholic youth organizations. But its time will only come when a reaction sets in against the Red rule which is at present threatening.

*Germans in Spain.* The anti-Fascist movement is also to a certain extent directed against the German community [*das Deutschtum*] in Spain, but apart from the familiar flag incident in Cadiz<sup>3</sup> this opposition has so far exhausted itself in nothing more serious than protests in the press and in letters, and a few demonstrations—which were of no significance—in front of the Embassy. The utmost restraint has been enjoined on all Germans in Spain.

*The position of the Left.* In contrast to the defensive position of the Right, the parties of the Left are engaged in an all-out offensive. The Socialist Party has always been superior to all other parties because of its exemplary organization through the Trade Unions. But, while a constantly widening rift is opening within the Party, in so far as the Right wing under Besteiro and Prieto is sharply opposed to the Left under Largo Caballero, the latter has succeeded in uniting all the radical left-wing parties and groups, so that today he is the true leader of the whole radical left-wing movement and the chief exponent of the revolutionary idea. There are no longer any differences between the left-wing Socialists, the Communists, the Syndicalists and the Anarchists. The resolution of the Comintern<sup>4</sup> has been carried out in full. Largo Caballero's following is composed, apart from the radical wing of the Trade Unions, of unemployed (700,000) and chiefly of the great

<sup>3</sup> During disturbances in the streets of Cadiz on Mar. 9, 1936, the flag of the German Consulate was pulled down and torn to shreds.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to a Resolution of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International (held in Moscow, July 20-Aug. 25, 1935) on a report by Dimitrov (see footnote 7 below), which was adopted on Aug. 20 and was entitled: *The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Fight for the Unity of the Working Class against Fascism*. For the text see *Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, Resolutions and Decisions* (Co-operative Publishing Society of Foreign Workers in the U.S.S.R., Moscow-Leningrad, 1935), pp. 11-34.



masses of distressed agricultural workers, amongst whom—also on instructions from Moscow (cf. DNB report in the *Völkischer Beobachter* of March 14)—the main agitation takes place. It is said that numerous Russian agitators are at work in the country. Béla Kun<sup>5</sup> is said to have been in Spain for several days now, together with the former German Communist Neumann.<sup>6</sup> A delegation of Communist youth has been sent to Dimitrov<sup>7</sup> in Russia. As a result of this intensive agitation the number of Largo Caballero's followers has grown considerably during the past few weeks compared with the last elections. Largo Caballero wants a dictatorship of the proletariat, the abolition of the Army, and the arming of the workers. The unity of Spain, he said recently in Barcelona, was a matter of indifference to him. He has announced that the Soviets will be proclaimed in Spain at the impending local elections.

It is generally doubted whether the application of a Soviet system to Spain, on the Russian pattern, will be feasible in the long run. For the Government it will at the moment, therefore, be a matter of doing all possible to prevent such a revolution, which is being prepared by determined revolutionaries and which, in conditions of complete anarchy, would plunge the country into an abyss of misery.

*Government policy.* The Government's policy, however, has so far consisted in waiting on events. Up to now they have let matters take their course. The police have been instructed not to interfere, and they passively look on at the mob's excesses and extortions. The rural administrations have been instructed to avoid any action which might rouse the people's anger.

Only a short while ago one heard the opinion expressed in Government circles that, in view of the mentality of the Spanish people, it was better to leave any conflagration that had broken out to burn itself out, rather than fan the flames, since in most cases it was but a fire of straw. Should a pendulum be knocked out of balance, one should let it swing, for it would revert of itself to its normal arc. These considerations are certainly valid in general for assessing and handling events in Spain. Nor are the excesses which have so far taken place, and which have become known abroad, disturbing in themselves: churches have often burned during revolutionary upheavals in Spain, disturbances, provided they remain local, subside again. In general the Spaniard is too indolent to pursue any cause to the end, however gallantly he may have begun, and he is fundamentally opposed

<sup>5</sup> Béla Kun, Hungarian Communist, leader of the Hungarian revolution in 1919 and Chairman of the Council of People's Commissars during the dictatorship, member of the Executive Committee and Presidium of the Comintern.

<sup>6</sup> Heinz Neumann, one of the leaders of the German Communist Party, elected to the Reichstag in 1930.

<sup>7</sup> Georgi Dimitrov, Bulgarian Communist member of the Executive Committee of the Comintern, lived in Russia after his acquittal of the charge of complicity in the Reichstag fire trial in 1933.



to any dictatorship, whether it comes from the Left or from the Right.

Apart from this, the Government are introducing legislation to implement the left-wing election programme. When the agricultural workers threatened to stage a mass march on Madrid on an appointed day, the Government, recognizing the danger, immediately distributed 70,000 hectares of land to the workers in the most revolutionary provinces. Thereupon the agricultural workers' rally was cancelled.

Azaña's previous government (1931-1933) was also under the influence of the then still moderate Socialists. Indeed, he caused them to carry out the *coup d'état* of October 1934.<sup>8</sup> Had he been victorious at that time, his position would have been similar to what it is now, i.e., the question would have arisen even then as to whether he could remain master of the masses upon whom he had called. The Government are today well aware of the danger that threatens them. They seem to be preparing a change in the tactics which they have used up to now. In a recent cabinet meeting Azaña is said to have declared that he would in no circumstances suffer Communist rule in Spain; he had no intention of sharing Kerensky's fate. He hoped that one day there would no longer be any parties in Spain, but only Spaniards on the one side and Communists on the other. There is no doubt that he has recognized in Largo Caballero his most dangerous opponent. Nonetheless, for the time being he is still obliged to follow Caballero's policy, and he has, indeed, said that at the local elections he will remain in the present coalition with the Left.

The question arises as to what course the Government will take in order to extricate themselves from their dilemma. There is some talk that Azaña may resign and be succeeded by Martínez Barrio, the leader of the other left-wing bourgeois government [*sic?* party] represented in the Government, whose policy tends more to the Right. Azaña himself is said to have told Largo Caballero that he (Largo) would not be his successor; if he himself were to resign, then a general would become Head of the Government. This alleged statement would fit in with his fundamental attitude towards the Army and towards the question of a military dictatorship. The use of force by employing troops clashes with his liberal and Masonic ideas; moreover, he fears that civil war would break out as the result of repression by force of arms. Azaña obviously no longer feels young enough for such a trial of strength. He is said to have aged greatly, compared to the

<sup>8</sup> After the composition of a new Cabinet under Señor Lerroux (Radical) had been announced on Oct. 4, 1934, the Socialists ordered a general strike which started the following day; fighting broke out in Madrid, Barcelona and a number of other places and went on sporadically for the rest of the month; the Catalan Government proclaimed a "Catalan State of the Spanish Federal Republic"; after Martial Law had been declared in Asturias and a large number of arrests made, the revolt was defeated at the beginning of November 1934. The *coup d'état* was the subject of report No. 3558 of Nov. 2, 1934 (8413/E592570-78), from the Embassy in Madrid.

man he was in 1931, and to have lost much of his resilience as a result of his long imprisonment in 1934.

Although it is obvious that the Government are taking steps to ensure that they will have the Army behind them, it is not generally believed that Azaña will decide to make use of the troops.

*The Army.* The temper of the Army is as yet irresolute. Its best leaders (Generals Franco and Goded) have been banished to distant parts. Among the younger officers there are many Fascists who are pressing for attack. The officers' corps knows that the existence of every individual is at stake. Discontent among the officers has grown, particularly since various acts of violence have been openly committed in Madrid, in broad daylight, against some of their comrades. There have been rumours recently of an army *coup*. There have, in fact, been such designs. The Government learned of them, however, and took counter-measures. Marxist propaganda in the ranks and amongst the non-commissioned officers has always been strong. It is hoped that, since the military reforms initiated by Gil Robles<sup>9</sup> last year, the bulk of the Army is better disciplined and will not permit itself to be used for a left-wing *coup*. According to a report by the War Minister,<sup>10</sup> the Army is at the Government's disposal, even though it is admitted that it is without generals. The Government will now try to make the Army non-political; they have ordered a purge, which is of course directed chiefly against the Fascists, and have arranged for new appointments to posts of command to be made from officers loyal to the Government. It remains questionable whether the Army, should the Government once make up their mind to use it, will suffice to crush a general revolution. It took the military weeks to suppress the local revolt in Asturias in October 1934 and they had to call in troops from Africa.

*The Police.* The Guardia Civil, Spain's best gendarmerie corps, would remain loyally at the disposal of the Government in the defensive struggle against Communism. The fighting value of the remaining police corps is small.

*Final Remarks.* To sum up, it can be said that, even though, to outward appearances, the situation has become more peaceful during the last few days, the process of radicalization has made great strides, that the Government have so far stood at ease, but that they seem determined, nonetheless, to combat Communism. The future will show whether the Azaña Government, with their kid-glove policy, will succeed, or whether there will yet be a military régime. It is generally assumed that the country will suffer severe convulsions in the near future. Should the defensive struggle not succeed, then a

<sup>9</sup> Leader of the Catholic Party (CEDA), Minister of War May 7, 1935–Feb. 18, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> General Carlos Masquelet.

Communist régime, even if only a temporary one, must be reckoned with, until the day when the wholesome energies of the people will have crystallized into a reaction against it. A permanent entrenchment of a Soviet system is not believed possible in Spain.

VÖLCKERS

## No. 222

760/270921-22

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy and to the Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, March 26, 1936.

W.A. No. 570/36 g.K.L I a

II M 1033 g Rs.

The Führer has caused the following statement to be made to the British Government by the German Ambassador:<sup>2</sup>

"The strength of the troops stationed in barracks in the Rhineland on a peace time basis will not, for the time being, be increased.

"There is at present no intention of moving these troops nearer to the French or the Belgian frontier.

"The extent of the military reoccupation of the Rhineland, as indicated above, applies for the duration of the negotiations now impending. This, of course, presupposes a similar attitude on the part of France and Belgium too."

You are therefore requested to make sure that, until further notice, none of the following take place in the former demilitarized zone:

- (1) Alteration in either the distribution or the strengths of the troop units.
- (2) Any intended replacement of some units by others.
- (3) Tactical exercises [*taktische Übungsreisen*] or conferences involving any sizeable number of participants west of the Rhine.
- (4) Manœuvres west of the Rhine on any considerable scale.
- (5) Clearance of former barracks or preparations for the building of new barracks in towns which are not at present garrisoned.
- (6) Transfers to training areas for instructional purposes before May 15.
- (7) Participation of the troops in the former demilitarized zone in large scale manœuvres.

<sup>1</sup> Copies were sent, with the request for appropriate action, to the Chief of Staff of the SA, the Reichsführer SS, the Korpsführer of the NSKK and the Reich Labour Leader, and for information to the Foreign Ministry and to Lt. Col. Hossbach, the Führer's military adjutant.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 84 and 85.



- (8) Westward flights from the new air force stations in the former demilitarized zone and flights from the other air force stations in the Reich into the former demilitarized zone.

I approve, however, of the carrying out of the following:

- (a) Exercises, minor manœuvres, tactical exercises and conferences east of the Rhine by troops stationed there.
- (b) The transfer of part of Infantry Régiment No. 14 from Lörrach to Müllheim. (The Foreign Ministry will be informed from here.)
- (c) Easter leave on a restricted scale.
- (d) The replacement, in conjunction with the Easter leave, of the former police officials (approximately 2,000) who are retiring on March 31.

I reserve to myself the decision as to when the 10,000 vacancies in the police shall be filled.

VON BLOMBERG

## No. 223

6710/E508291-95

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 58 of March 26

LONDON, March 27, 1936—0:05 a.m.

Received March 27—3:05 a.m.

II R 819.

The big debate in the House of Commons on the Rhineland crisis today<sup>1</sup> was dominated by an extremely powerful speech for the defence by Eden, which made a great impression on the House. That it was a speech for the defence, and was indeed an answer to the criticisms levelled by public opinion at the project of the Locarno Powers,<sup>2</sup> was freely admitted by Eden himself. He alluded clearly, as did other speakers, to the pro-German attitude of public opinion.

Eden began by tracing the historical chain of events which had led to demilitarization and to Locarno. He condemned what he called Germany's breach of treaty and, above all, he criticized Germany for having taken the law into her own hands and for not having followed the path of negotiation or arbitration.

Then, reading aloud paragraphs 1 and 2 of Article 4 of the Rhine Pact, he established Britain's obligation to render aid, and, raising his voice, declared that he was not prepared to be the first British Foreign Secretary to break Britain's word.

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Mar. 26; for the record of this debate see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1435-1549; Eden's speech is printed in cols. 1435-1449.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.



He emphasized at length and repeatedly the great gravity of the situation, and at one point went so far as to speak of a choice between the Four Power document<sup>2</sup> and war.

He said that the guiding principle of British policy was the endeavour to bring about negotiations and in that way to build up a new peace system based on the principle of collectively securing peace. He devoted some words of approval to Germany's urge for equality of rights and to the definitive goal "in the matter" of Germany,<sup>3</sup> but at the same time made one urgent appeal after another to the Reich Government to make some contribution towards bridging over the dangerous interim period before general negotiations began. With great earnestness he declared that without some such contribution no solution seemed possible. In this connection he mentioned, as a considerable concession which had already been made, the Chancellor's assurance that the strength of the German troops in the Rhineland zone would not be increased during the negotiations on the German proposals,<sup>4</sup> but described this concession as not being sufficient. To this he added the remark that if during the negotiations no fortifications were to be constructed in the zone this would be a further German contribution calculated greatly to ease the situation. He further added that the making of this further concession had so far been rejected by Germany, which the House received with displeasure.

In a lengthy passage he then defended the military arrangements agreed upon in the Four-Power project, declaring that these arrangements would not create a new political situation but would only . . . (group corrupt) modalities of technical execution in the event of a German attack. He invoked traditional British policy, which had always regarded a threat to the Netherlands and possibly also to France as endangering the security of Britain.

He drew a very sharp distinction between the danger of war in Western Europe and the possibility of war in the rest of Europe. It is only for the former case that he is prepared to countenance a special commitment whilst in the latter case Britain's obligations should continue to be confined to her commitments under the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Having first described Britain's position in the crisis as being not that of an actual mediator, but of a guarantor, he then stressed that Britain must in principle refuse to allow herself to be drawn to one side or the other by France or Germany. Thereupon he first called on France not to allow obstinate intransigence to stand in the way of a peaceful

<sup>3</sup> The sense of this passage in the original is obscure and it may have been garbled in transmission, although only the word "definitive" is marked as having been queried by the cipher section. The German is: "*Er widmete deutschem Drang nach Gleichberechtigung und dem definitiven Ziel nach 'in der Sache' Deutschland zuzustimmende Worte . . .*" The London draft has not been found.

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 84 and 85.

development and then addressed an appeal to Germany not to persist in her obstinacy.

Eden's speech went a long way towards weakening such opposition as was present in the House, and it was clear that in making his appeal for a German contribution he had the whole House solidly behind him.

Under the influence of the Foreign Secretary's speech, the Socialist and Liberal Opposition speakers who followed obviously toned down the attacks they had intended to deliver.

The Labour speaker<sup>5</sup> began by describing the German menace, which was filling Germany's neighbours with fear. He then attacked the military arrangements and special alliances and demanded in their stead the expansion of the League of Nations security system on the model of the Geneva Protocol of 1924,<sup>6</sup> with the inclusion of as many States as possible, and particularly of Soviet Russia.

The Liberal speaker<sup>7</sup> criticized Germany's breach of treaty but supported equality of rights and stressed the gravity of Italy's crime of aggression compared with Germany's reoccupation of her own territory.

Very effective was Lloyd George's intervention<sup>8</sup> when in dramatic phrases he warned the Government of the dangers of military arrangements. He described how, in 1914, it had been just such military arrangements which, despite the negotiations then still in train, had led to war. In this connection he referred to the Russian mobilization and announced, as a hitherto unknown fact, that, with the exception of a few Ministers, the British Cabinet had been unaware of the Anglo-French military arrangements. In fiery words he declared that military arrangements were more dangerous than alliances and that Poincaré<sup>9</sup> himself had told him that he would prefer General Staff agreements to an alliance, as being more reliable. Lloyd George did not deny that Germany had broken the treaty as she was alleged to have done, but drew attention to the breaches of treaty by Germany's co-signatories, particularly to the invasion of the Ruhr and the non-fulfilment of disarmament obligations.

Great as was the impression made by Lloyd George's warning against military arrangements, yet Sir Austen Chamberlain<sup>10</sup> received still more applause when, in a sharp passage of arms with Lloyd George, he

<sup>5</sup> Mr. Hugh Dalton; for the text of his speech see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1449-1461.

<sup>6</sup> The reference is to the Protocol for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes, the acceptance of which was recommended by the League of Nations Assembly to all member States on Oct. 2, 1924 (see *Monthly Summary of the League of Nations*, supplement October, 1924), but which was later rejected by the British Government.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Archibald Sinclair; for the text of his speech see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1461-1468.

<sup>8</sup> See *ibid.*, cols. 1472-1482.

<sup>9</sup> Raymond Poincaré, French President 1913-1920 and Minister President 1922-1924 and 1926-1929.

<sup>10</sup> For the text of Sir Austen Chamberlain's speech see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1482-1487.

condemned Germany's policy of so-called treaty breaking and in general painted the German menace in sombre colours.

The debate, at which, beside Bismarck and myself, Dieckhoff too was present, and which has not yet ended,<sup>11</sup> shows beyond any doubt that Parliament, as has already been stated in our reports, has adopted a very much more unfavourable attitude towards Germany than has public opinion. The risk which it was widely predicted here the Government would run by participation in the Four Power proposal appears to have been dispelled by Eden's effective intervention. It must therefore be expected that in their demand for a German contribution towards bridging over the interim period, the British Government will be able to rely on the full support of Parliament and therefore also of the press. There appears to be no immediate danger of a change in the sympathetic attitude of public opinion, but the public will certainly not oppose the demand for a German contribution either.

HOESCH

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<sup>11</sup> The remainder of the debate was reported upon in the London Embassy's despatch A 1368 of Mar. 27 (6710/E508317-21).

## No. 224

7268/E533531-32

### *The Consulate at Zagreb to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 4 of March 26  
Delegation No. 2

ZAGREB, March 27, 1936—2:50 a.m.  
Received March 27—5:45 a.m.

I. The negotiations have led to our reaching an objective for which we have striven for a year: The Yugoslav Government are now prepared, by a new regulation of imports, to undertake a large scale shift over of total imports to purchases from Germany. Thereby, and also by means of large State contracts, there should take place even in the present year, according to Yugoslav calculations which we have checked in detail, a rise in German exports to Yugoslavia of about 40 million Reichsmark, that is more than double the previous amount. This would mean that the German share of Yugoslavia's imports would rise to *more than a third* and that the German Government would obtain the predominating position in the Yugoslav market which Italy held for fifteen years. A decree providing the basis for the new settlement is to be published already . . . (group corrupt) the negotiations. It is my impression that the Yugoslav Government are genuinely relying on the success of the shift [in the pattern of imports]. They are



even hoping to achieve bigger rises, in order thus to make possible an increase in Yugoslav exports to Germany from 60 to roughly 90 million Reichsmark per annum. We have held out prospects of meeting this wish by increasing the existing quotas and, in two cases, by granting new quotas for agricultural produce with precise rebates, but only in the event of the rise in German exports attaining the desired proportions and having the expected effects on the balance and rate of exchange. A further proof of the confidence with which the Yugoslavs are relying on the success of the plan is that, by releasing us from our commitments under the Commercial Treaty,<sup>1</sup> they are conceding us the right to impose on our side restrictions on Yugoslav imports into Germany should the plan miscarry. Furthermore, the Yugoslavs recognize that the new settlement is intended to lead to a rise in the clearing cheque rate. But the National Bank declines any guarantee of a rise in the rate. It did not prove possible to obtain compensation for the disadvantages resulting from the low rate in respect of purchases of bauxite and some other raw materials. The Yugoslavs believe that the favourable treatment accorded to our exports is of importance to us and that they have consequently no occasion to make further concessions. In addition, they are convinced that, for political reasons, Germany will not let the negotiations fail over such questions.

II. In view of the favourable results of the negotiations over the most important points, there is no avoiding making concessions over at least some of the Yugoslav *desiderata*. I therefore request that I may be empowered to meet the Yugoslav proposal that tourist traffic be authorized to a total of 4 million Reichsmark, by going up to 3 million. This to be compensated by the proceeds of Yugoslav tourist traffic in Germany and by additional State contracts, to which the clearing cheque rate must apply, for otherwise State contracts are not possible. To refuse would jeopardize the whole outcome.

In addition, as concerns our refusal of supply scrap, the Yugoslavs have expressed, with especial urgency, the desire to obtain at least 500 waggon-loads. It is my view that, bearing in mind also that the supplies are destined for the Volksdeutsche . . . (group corrupt) West, that it is urgently desirable to release a single consignment of 300 waggon-loads.

Negotiations are still proceeding over a number of points of detail.

Please telegraph reply.<sup>2</sup>

SARNOW  
CLODIUS

<sup>1</sup> Of May 1, 1934; for further details see vol. II of this Series, document No. 318 and vol. III, document No. 23.

<sup>2</sup> The working files of Department II concerned with economic relations with Yugoslavia are not held and no reply to the document here printed has been found. The agreements were signed on Apr. 1; for the published texts see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, pp. 114-115; the secret protocol and its annexes are filmed as 9841/E692070-101.



## No. 225

6710/E508299-300

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 173 of March 26

PARIS, March 27, 1936—[9:00 a.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 27—11:20 a.m.

II R 821.

The present situation in France presents uncertainties, both abroad and at home. On the one hand there is, in particular, uncertainty about the attitude of Britain, Italy and the League of Nations; on the other hand there are internal differences over the attitude to be adopted towards Germany and Soviet Russia, besides aversion to war, the pressure of the economic and financial situation, and the election campaign. Nevertheless, it is still possible to discern certain principles governing the French attitude towards the Rhineland conflict, which, in my view, may be expected to hold good not only for the present Government, but also, in so far as it is at all possible to discern anything today, for any subsequent Government. They also appear to me to be of importance in judging the question of how France may be expected to react to the new German proposals.

1. France takes the view that the abrogation of the Locarno Pact by Germany constitutes an action the outcome of which will be decisive for her future and her honour too. She is therefore determined not to accept it without more ado. The view that Germany has thus once again thrown down the gauntlet at France's feet, and that this time the challenge must be accepted, is widely held in leading political and military quarters.

2. These quarters see in the abolition of the demilitarized zone the penultimate link in the chain of *faits accomplis*, which constitute the preparatory steps for future unilateral German action on the eastern frontier. The last link would automatically unleash war. They therefore believe that they cannot now accept recognition of remilitarization and that they cannot rest content without a clear disavowal, in some form or other, of Germany's action in the Rhineland.

3. France holds the view that the military situation in the event of warlike complications on Germany's eastern frontier would be rendered considerably more difficult once remilitarization had been completed. In this connection the question of fortifications is of particular importance to her. The construction of a German line of fortifications in the Rhineland is regarded here today not only as a serious obstacle to

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris Embassy draft (6403/E475011-12).

the fulfilment of France's alliance obligations in the event of war in the East, but also as basically imposing limitations upon her position as a European Great Power. France will therefore most determinedly oppose it.

4. The idea of later entering into negotiations on the German proposals for pacifying Europe is viewed here with hesitation by some, but is completely rejected by the great majority. Mistrust of any treaty offers coming from Germany is at the moment strong even among those elements which tend to be friendly towards Germany. The endeavours of authoritative circles are at present directed primarily towards strengthening France's position *vis-à-vis* Germany by measures at home (uniting and guiding French public opinion, military preparations, etc.) and the building up of diplomatic-military alliances; in this connection hopes are also still held of Britain in particular, despite deep hesitations, because the French feel that in the Locarno Pact they have a powerful lever where Britain is concerned.

Whether this feeling can be changed and an atmosphere of trust favourable to fruitful general negotiations be created cannot at present be foreseen, because for France the satisfactory . . . (group mutilated)<sup>2</sup> and conclusion of preliminary negotiations are a precondition for this.

FORSTER

<sup>2</sup> The Paris draft (see footnote 1 above) here reads: ". . . the satisfactory progress and conclusion . . ."

## No. 226

5753/H040594-95

### *The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 39 of March 27

VIENNA, March 27, 1936—9:30 p.m.

Received March 27—11:55 p.m.

II It. 348.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

My today's conversation with the Minister for Foreign Affairs, who has returned from Rome<sup>1</sup>—and whom I have informed, as instructed,<sup>2</sup> of the Reich Government's views on the Locarno Pact—confirms in essentials Herr von Hassell's report<sup>3</sup> on the Rome conference. The principal subject discussed was the possibility of expanding the Three Power Pact, in which connection they had, of course, thought first of Germany and then of Poland. To my question whether Austria had thus given up the idea of a closer liaison with the Little Entente

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 165, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 200 and footnote 7 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 204 and footnote 5 thereto.

and the Western Powers, Berger replied that this combination had always been regarded by Austria only as an aid in maintaining Austria's independence, and never as a means of conducting a policy against Germany's interests. Mussolini believed that a closer liaison between the authoritarian régimes was highly necessary. To my question as to whether the firm new commitment, accepting that political decisions could only be taken by agreement between the three parties would not prejudice Austria's freedom of action, the Foreign Minister replied that, to some degree, this was true. On the other hand it would have the advantage that in future Italy, too, would have to bring her policy into harmony with Hungarian and Austrian wishes. The bilateral arrangement was confined exclusively to economic agreements. Berger also emphasized that there were no secret agreements. I have, however, learnt from a private source that Austria, in return for her political commitment, has demanded Italy's support in the following questions in the event of a reconciliation with Berlin:

1. Whatever may be the future composition of the Austrian Cabinet, Schuschnigg and Starhemberg must remain.
2. No elections on the Austro-German issue to be permitted.
3. No pronouncedly National Socialist Minister to be included in the event of a Cabinet reshuffle.

I regard these Austrian reservations to insure against strong Italo-Hungarian pressure for a *rapprochement* as being correct.

It seems to me that, as regards future developments, the supplementary Rome Protocols have greatly increased the significance of the Hungarian attitude.

I shall report verbally on Sunday or Monday with regard to the suggestion for tripartite conversations contained in my telegram of March 12.<sup>4</sup>

PAPEN

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 90.

## No. 227

6710/E508389-93

### *Memorandum by a Member of the German Delegation in London*

LONDON, March 27, 1936.

II R 873.

#### *On the question of General Staff talks.*

The speeches by Eden and N. Chamberlain in the House of Commons<sup>1</sup> introduced no new factors in the question of the General Staff talks

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<sup>1</sup> On Mar. 26; see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1435-1439 and 1538-1549.

between Britain and France/Belgium. Eden confined himself to clarifying the "Proposals" of the four Powers<sup>2</sup> on this point and to explaining them.

The British attitude proceeds from the following premises:

(1) Britain stands by her obligations under the Locarno Treaty, and (2) those sections of the "Proposals" of the four Powers which do not require German cooperation are "already binding on Britain politically.

In the "Proposals", General Staff talks are contemplated in three places:

(a) *In Section III (the Interim Period).*

Under this Section the four Powers undertake forthwith (*dès à présent*)<sup>3</sup> to instruct their General Staffs to enter into contact with a view to arranging the technical conditions in which the obligations under Locarno are to be carried out in the case of *unprovoked aggression*.

This agreement, as Eden again explained, relates to the *interim period* until definitive agreements are concluded with German participation.

The agreement represents the *additional security* which, as a result of the German abrogation of Locarno, *Britain* is offering to *France* and *Belgium* for the interim period. It contains no new political commitments, but is designed, as Eden explained, in contrast to the General Staff agreements of 1914, merely to implement existing political obligations, i.e., the obligation to render assistance in the event of unprovoked aggression. According to Eden's statements in the House of Commons, Britain is requiring from France and Belgium an explicit declaration in this respect on the model of the Belgian-French Agreement of March 6, 1936.<sup>4</sup>

The question of whether General Staff talks have already been started in this connection cannot be answered with complete certainty. The statements in the House of Commons, the course of diplomatic conversations during the last few days, the fact that the British Parliament has only now taken up the question, and other information, suggest that they have not. Be that as it may, nothing can now stop these talks, as far as Britain and France/Belgium are concerned, from being begun very shortly, unless the British Parliament disapproves of this policy. There is, however, every indication that the great majority in Parliament supports the Government.

From the German point of view the fact of the General Staff talks is, of course, extremely unwelcome. Their principal danger lies in the fact that they may lessen France's interest in a final solution. Since the precondition, namely, an unprovoked attack by Germany, is

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> The words in brackets are in French in the original.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 143.



beyond the bounds of possibility and since Britain is always at liberty to decide whether the precondition obtains or not, there is no need for us to make our policy hinge on this arrangement, which by definition is only a temporary one. *Rather must we proceed from the assumption that it is only on the basis of this supplementary guarantee that France can be restrained from putting forward her far-reaching demands for the interim period and be brought to the conference table after the French elections.* We must of course support that section of public opinion which clearly recognizes the danger of commitments of this nature. Germany's approval is not being required, nor does it enter into the question.

(b) *Draft communication from the Guarantor Powers to France and Belgium. (The contingency of failure to reach agreement on an interim solution.)*

N. Chamberlain made it clear in the House of Commons that the obligations assumed under the communication would not come into force at once if Germany rejected the "Proposals" as such, but only when all possibilities of negotiation had been exhausted.

The relationship between the military obligations assumed here and those referred to under (a) above for the interim period is not immediately apparent.

Besides the obligation to consult, the communication (under (b)) contains first of all the declaration that in this event (i.e., certainly not at the present stage) Britain will *immediately* come to the assistance of France and Belgium in accordance with her obligations to render assistance, but with the important reservation that this applies solely to measures *jointly* decided upon. There is no mention of military measures or of General Staff agreements for this event. Chamberlain categorically confirmed that it might be a question of getting the German troops out of the Rhineland again.

There is a further obligation, as in Section III of the Proposals, in case of *unprovoked aggression*. But whereas, under Section III, the General Staffs are only to be instructed to *arrange* the technical conditions, here Britain undertakes to *ensure*, by all practical measures within her power, the security of France and Belgium; for this purpose the General Staff talks contemplated in Section III are to be established or continued. This British commitment, however—on the model of the French assurances to Britain in the Mediterranean in the event of an Italian attack—is made dependent upon the *condition of reciprocity*.

What the difference, in the military sense, is between the General Staff talks contemplated in Section III and those on the basis of this communication is not, of course, stated. Nor does the House of Commons debate throw any light on this point. But it does emerge from the texts that, should the present negotiations fail, the General Staff

talks will enter upon a more concrete stage, and particularly that in that case, and only in that case, *practical measures* (naturally of a preparatory nature) are to be taken.

The General Staff talks in this case are not to begin until the preconditions have been fulfilled; but if the talks under Section III have already begun, it will probably no longer be possible to make a sharp distinction [between them].

The British communications to France and Belgium have admittedly not yet been despatched, but Britain considers herself to be already politically committed on this also, at any rate from the moment that France makes the requisite declaration of reciprocity. This had not so far been done, at least not publicly.

(c) *Section VII of the "Proposals". Final Settlement.*

According to the Proposals, the final settlement is to include a convention containing obligations of mutual assistance, which are to be supplemented by military agreements. The four Powers have, according to the "Proposals", envisaged concluding such supplementary military agreements in any case amongst themselves.

On this point it will be of the utmost importance to obtain an assurance from Britain that in a general agreement there will be no one-sided British Staff commitments.

WOERMANN

## No. 228

6710/E508457-66

*Memorandum by a Member of the German Delegation in London*

DIARY OF THE DELEGATION IN LONDON, MARCH 18-27, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

II R 891.

*March 18, 1936.*—When the Delegation arrived in London in the late afternoon of March 18, 1936, the debate in the Council of the League of Nations on the Franco-Belgian resolution was already so far advanced that all the speakers, except the President of the Council, had stated their views on the resolution. Of the Powers of special interest to us, the representatives of Britain, Italy, Poland and Denmark spoke at the afternoon session of the Council on March 18, as did also the representatives of Rumania, Argentina, Spain and Portugal. All the speakers had declared that they would vote for the Franco-Belgian

<sup>1</sup> This document is undated but marked as entered in the Foreign Ministry register on Apr. 1, 1936. It is printed here under Mar. 27, the date of the Delegation's departure for Germany, for the convenience of the reader.

resolution. Eden, basing himself on his speech in the House of Commons of March 9,<sup>2</sup> had moreover, made a special point of stressing the importance of further constructive work.

In the atmosphere engendered by this debate (the text of Eden's speech being already to hand), the Leader of the Delegation called on Eden at 8 o'clock. The conversation with the British Secretary of State was reported in the Delegation's telegram No. 1 of March 18.<sup>3</sup>

Following on the Leader of the Delegation's call on Eden, the Delegation held a conference at the German Embassy at 9 o'clock. It had meanwhile been learnt that it was intended at the Council's meeting, fixed for 10 a.m. on March 19, to proceed to a vote on the Franco-Belgian resolution immediately after hearing the speech of the German representative on the Council [*sic*]. The adoption of this plan would have been damaging to the advocacy of the German cause before the Council and before public opinion, inasmuch as it would have entailed the simultaneous publication of the German thesis and of the finding that Germany was in breach of treaty. It was therefore necessary to obtain a postponement of the vote to allow an interval of time to elapse after the speech of the German representative. With this object in view the Leader of the Delegation called on the Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, Lord Craneburn [*sic*], who, however, referred him to the President of the Council.<sup>4</sup>

*March 19, [1936].*—Accordingly the German representative on the Council took the occasion of his call on the President of the Council, before the beginning of the Council meeting fixed for 2 [*sic*: 10] o'clock on March 19, to advocate a postponement of the vote at least until the afternoon of March 19.<sup>5</sup> At the private Council meeting which then followed at 10:15 a.m., the President of the Council put forward the German proposal for discussion and gave the German representative an opportunity of stating the case for his proposal to the Council. After the French representative on the Council (Flandin), having expressly emphasized that his attitude was dictated by courtesy, had agreed, it was resolved that the vote should not be taken until the afternoon of March 19. The Council then convened in a public session, at which only the German representative spoke. The meeting, including the translation of the German speech, lasted until 12 noon.

At 3 p.m. the Council again met in public session to proceed to a vote. Before this, at the beginning of the meeting, the President of the Council stated his attitude. The vote was then taken by roll-call, and resulted in the Franco-Belgian resolution being carried unanimously, as the votes of the parties [to the dispute] (France and Belgium

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 56.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 152.

<sup>4</sup> No fuller record of this has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 154.



had voted in favour and Germany against) and the one abstention, by Chile, were not included in the result. The meeting closed with the protest entered by the German representative at the outcome of the vote.

After the Council meeting, the Leader of the Delegation and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff called on Eden and Halifax at the Foreign Office. The subject of the conversation was the Proposals drawn up by the Locarno Powers.<sup>6</sup> This conversation was reported in telegram No. 2 of March 19.<sup>7</sup>

*March 20, [1936].*—The text of the Proposals was furnished to the Leader of the German Delegation by the Foreign Office informally "with Mr. Eden's compliments" at ten minutes past midnight, and was then telephoned through *verbatim* in English to Berlin.<sup>8</sup>

During the morning the Leader of the Delegation had another conversation with Eden, whom he informed of his own personal impression of the Proposals. The Leader of the Delegation had been invited to a conversation with the King at 12:30 [p.m.]. The conversation lasted half an hour.<sup>4</sup>

At the beginning of the Council meeting on the afternoon of March 19, the [Council] President had stated in private session that the Council should not regard its task as having been accomplished by the vote, but that it should follow the further developments. Another meeting of the Council was therefore fixed for the afternoon of Friday, March 20, to be devoted to discussing the procedural questions which had arisen. Telegram No. 3<sup>8</sup> reported on this meeting which began at 5 p.m. The German representative on the Council attended this meeting without, however, speaking at it, as the President merely posed for debate the question of when the Council should meet again to discuss the Proposals of the Locarno Powers. The Council therefore merely resolved to meet again on Monday afternoon, March 23, at 4 o'clock.

*March 21, 1936.*—In the morning the Leader of the Delegation had a telephone conversation with Eden and then a personal discussion with the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck.<sup>4</sup> The conversation with Eden concerned the so-called Proposals of the Locarno Powers.

In the afternoon the Leader of the Delegation left by air for Berlin with some members of his staff.

*March 22, 1936.*—It became known on Sunday morning that a group of seven European Powers (Denmark, Spain, Sweden, Norway, Finland, the Netherlands and Switzerland), under the chairmanship of the Danish Foreign Minister, had discussed the attitude to be adopted in the Council at the debate on the Proposals of the Locarno Powers. In doing so, the above-named Powers were following a practice which had

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 162.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 168 with footnote 4 thereto.



already been adopted during the Disarmament Conference. The Delegation's telegram No. 4 reported on this discussion.<sup>9</sup>

*March 23, 1936.*—In the course of Sunday there had been opportunity to take further account of the impression made by the so-called Proposals of the Locarno Powers on British public opinion and on circles friendly towards us. The result of this, especially a suggestion emanating from Lord Mottistone for a counter-proposal for procuring the desired occupation of a frontier strip by international troops, was transmitted to the Foreign Minister by telephone at 9:45 (Delegation telegram No. 5).<sup>10</sup>

A meeting of the Council of the League of Nations had been arranged for the afternoon of March 23 at 4 p.m. The Committee of Thirteen (the League Council without Italy) met in the morning to consider the Italian-Abyssinian conflict.<sup>11</sup> Following this session of the Committee of Thirteen, the President of the Council unofficially consulted those members of the Council present about the desirability of postponing the Council meeting fixed for that afternoon until Tuesday, as, on the one hand, one of the Locarno Powers (Italy) had not yet made known its attitude towards the so-called Proposals of the Locarno Powers, and, on the other, the German attitude towards these Proposals was also not known officially. The President of the Council then decided to postpone the session until Tuesday afternoon at 4 p.m. The German Delegation was informed of this by a member of the League of Nations Secretariat.

*March 24, 1936.*—In the course of the night of [March] 23/24 there appeared two semi-official Havas communiqués and one inspired Reuter one. The first Havas communiqué stated that, for the French Government, the so-called Proposals of the Locarno Powers formed one indivisible whole, and that, accordingly, the French Government would not conduct negotiations with Germany for the purpose of altering these Proposals. The subsequently issued Reuter communiqué expressed British surprise and regret at the proposed adoption by France of an intransigent attitude such as had been announced. To lessen the unfavourable impression made by the Paris Havas report, the French Delegation in London issued a fresh communiqué, which spoke of the possibility of continuing the negotiations through diplomatic channels and at the same time indicated that the Council of the League of Nations could, after adopting the Proposals of the Locarno Powers either in part or *en bloc*, conclude its meetings in London. The texts [of these communiqués] were transmitted to the Foreign Ministry in telegram No. 6.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>9</sup> Document No. 179.

<sup>10</sup> Document No. 188.

<sup>11</sup> See document No. 219 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>12</sup> Not printed (6710/E508109-11); this telegram gave the texts of all three communiqués in English.

On the subject of the Council's meeting, a further Reuter communiqué appeared, which spoke of the probability that the Council would adjourn in any case, without having entered upon a material discussion of the Proposals. During the morning an exchange of views took place amongst those Powers primarily concerned (without Germany) on this suggestion, which obviously emanated from the French side and which was supported by several Council Powers. After some opposition from Britain this exchange of views led to the suggestion that the President of the Council should put forward a resolution to adjourn when the Council met in the afternoon.

In order to inform the German Delegation of the proposed adjournment, the President of the Council asked the acting Leader of the German Delegation to call on him a little in advance of the meeting. The President of the Council, having thus ascertained that Germany would be agreeable to an adjournment *sine die*, accordingly put to the Council a draft resolution, basing it on the grounds that the Proposals of the Locarno Powers had, for the time being, only been sent to the Council for information, but had not been put before it for discussion. Moreover, no Council Power had seized the Council of the situation under Article 11. As the Council had concluded the task which devolved upon it under the Locarno Treaty by adopting, on [March] 19, the resolutions proposed by France and Belgium, there remained at present nothing further for the Council to do but to adjourn. The Council resolved in favour of this and empowered the President to reconvene the Council in continuation of its extraordinary session when circumstances should give him cause to consider this desirable. (Delegation telegrams Nos. 7<sup>13</sup> and 8.<sup>14</sup>)

With the conclusion of the proceedings in the Council under the Locarno Treaty, the German Delegation's legal position in the Council became unclear. The Council's meeting on the afternoon of March 20 had offered no opportunity to bring about a clarification, *per se* desirable, of this question, as the only topic discussed then was whether and when the Council should meet again. At his conversation with the President of the Council before the meeting on the afternoon of [March] 24, the acting Leader of the German Delegation informed the President of the Council that he would have to require the Council to clarify the German position in the Council if a discussion of the Proposals of the Locarno Powers were to be embarked upon. It appeared to the President of the Council, too, that such a clarification would be required in this event. He showed understanding for the German view that Germany could participate in a further discussion in the Council only as a member possessed of full equality of rights, but did not commit

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 201 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>14</sup> Not printed (6710/E508149-51); this telegram gave the main points of the President's speech in the Council's private session.

himself on the question of Germany's right to vote. Since the Council, at its meeting, again only adopted a resolution to adjourn, a clarification of the question of Germany's position in the Council was again left in abeyance.

Whilst the German Delegation were taking part in the Council's session, the Leader of the Delegation returned to London by air. He first summoned the whole Delegation in order to inform it of the Führer's reply<sup>15</sup> to the Proposals of the Locarno Powers. At 7 o'clock the Leader of the Delegation gave the German text of the reply, together with a translation prepared by the German side, to the British Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, by whom he was received in the presence of Lord Cranborne. The presentation of the Note was followed by a conversation of about an hour's duration, the subjects of which were reported in telegram No. 9.<sup>16</sup>

In answer to an enquiry from the Foreign Office, the British Government were told, on the instructions of the Leader of the Delegation, that there were no German objections to the British Government's communicating the text of the German reply to the other Governments concerned.

The representatives of the German, as well as of the majority of the British and other foreign press, received the text from the German Delegation.

*March 25, 1936.*—At 3 p.m. a conversation between the Leader of the Delegation and Foreign Secretary Eden took place at the House of Commons. Thereafter a report was sent by telegram to the Führer (telegram No. 11).<sup>17</sup>

*March 26, 1936.*—The Leader of the Delegation was invited to breakfast with Prime Minister Baldwin at 9 o'clock.<sup>4</sup> A telephone conversation took place on the subject of this conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister<sup>4</sup> and later with the Führer.<sup>4</sup>

In the afternoon Eden made a statement in the House of Commons which was followed by a debate.

*March 27, 1936.*—At 11:45 a.m. Eden received the Leader of the Delegation and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff at the Foreign Office.<sup>4</sup> During the morning the Leader of the Delegation had been in touch with the Führer by telephone<sup>4</sup> and it was arranged that a report should be made that evening in Godesberg.<sup>4</sup>

The Delegation left by air at 4 p.m. and arrived at Godesberg at 7 p.m.

W. SCHM[IEDEN]

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<sup>15</sup> Document No. 207.

<sup>16</sup> Document No. 208.

<sup>17</sup> Document No. 211.

## No. 229

7456/H176326

*Unsigned Memorandum*

[BERLIN, March 27, 1936.]

zu II R 784.<sup>1</sup>

TELEPHONE MESSAGE FROM LIEUTENANT COMMANDER  
MÖSSEL, NAVAL HIGH COMMAND, WAR MINISTRY,  
MARCH 27, 1936

Reference: Foreign Ministry II R 784.<sup>1</sup>

(A) When stating our definitive views on the new Naval Treaty (next week) it is our intention to say that, in accordance with her declaration on the conclusion of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, Germany is prepared to become party to Part IV of the London Treaty of 1930.<sup>2</sup>

(B) The Naval High Command has no objection to the publication of a statement to this effect.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7456/H176324). In this telegram, No. 70 of Mar. 25, Luther reported that a *procès-verbal* [attached to the 1936 London Naval Treaty, see Editors' Note, p. 304] accepting the rules on submarine warfare set in Pt. IV of the 1930 London Naval Treaty, would shortly be signed; the "Press Chief" of the State Department had suggested that Germany should make a gesture by declaring herself willing to sign too.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 156 and 165.

## No. 230

3242/712514-16

*Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht*  
*Blomberg to Foreign Minister Neurath*

W.A. No. 580/36 g.K.L I a  
TOP SECRET MILITARY

BERLIN, March 27, 1936.  
Received March 27.

DEAR HERR V. NEURATH: For the second part of the Note to the British Government on the question of the Rhineland zone, I send you herewith the *military* contributions to the envisaged proposals.

(1) *Fortifications:*

For the duration of the negotiations—at the most, however, until September 30, 1936—no *permanent* fortifications will be constructed in the former demilitarized zone.

We reserve the right to erect new *field* fortifications for the protection of the troops, in so far as French and Belgian military preparations make this appear necessary.



(2) *Obligation to render assistance:*

In a communication addressed to the Locarno Powers on December 12, 1924,<sup>1</sup> Germany expressed the view that as a disarmed State she must be given the opportunity, in the event of international conflicts, to decide for herself to what extent she would be able to participate militarily in an action under Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations,<sup>2</sup> for the reason that, as a disarmed State, she did not wish to forgo the protection of neutrality.

In the present circumstances, the German Reich Government declare that, should the need arise, they would be both willing and able to meet a request for military assistance, should the British Government consider such a contribution to security to be useful.

(3) *Military Commission:*

The German Reich Government are of the opinion that everything should be done to counteract anxiety among the public in the immediate future.

They therefore state that they are prepared to agree, for the duration of the coming negotiations, to the setting up of a commission of military experts of the signatories of the Locarno Pact, which could meet in Luxemburg under British leadership.<sup>3</sup>

The task of this commission would be to investigate all reports and rumours of frontier violations and military preparations for an attack in the German frontier area on the one hand and the Belgian and French frontier areas on the other.

The extent of this frontier zone, which would have to be of *equal depth* on both sides of the German-Belgian and the German-French frontiers, would have to be subject to separate arrangements.

The German Reich Government state that they are prepared to afford to this commission all the assistance which it may require in order to carry out the necessary investigations and enquiries on the spot in the German frontier area, provided that France/Belgium give similar assurances.

V. BLOMBERG

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<sup>1</sup> For the text see *The Monthly Summary of the League of Nations*, vol. 4, 1924, pp. 287-291.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "We are no longer a member of the League of Nations."

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "But this is the Control Commission which we rejected. Military Attachés." See also documents Nos. 182, 183 and 233.

## No. 231

5576/E400434-42

*The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

Genstb.d.H.3.Abt.Att.Gr. 1

zu No. 278/36 geh. u.

No. 284/36 geh.

BERLIN, March 27, 1936.

Received March 26 [*sic*].

II M 1049 g.

I enclose for your information parts of reports from the Military Attaché in London, viz. enclosure 14 to [Report] No. 14/36 of March 26, and enclosures 1 and 3 to Report No. 15/36 of March 26, 1936.

By order:  
PAPPENHEIM

[Enclosure 1]

*The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich War Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, March 26, 1936.

FROM A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE

Enclosure 14 to [Report No.] 14/36

Subject: Conversation with the competent Head of Section in the War Office.

(1) No agreements have yet been made between the British and French General Staffs.

The Government have not yet given any instructions on this.<sup>2</sup> The White Paper<sup>3</sup> [Section] III, paragraph 2, top of page 3, is only a proposal.<sup>4</sup>

(2) The situation was at breaking point (very, very serious).<sup>5</sup> In the British view it was saved by the attitude of the German General Staff in that the British General Staff were able to point out to the French General Staff that the occupation of the Rhineland was a political, not a military, measure and that this had not been brought about by the German General Staff.

<sup>1</sup> This document was circulated within the Foreign Ministry and to Ribbentrop by Department II with a minute of Apr. 1 (5576/E400443), which noted that it was not clear whether the Ambassador was informed of the enclosed reports or not.

<sup>2</sup> In the original a note at this point reads: "Corrected by telephone, v. Stülpnagel." Major Gen. Heinrich von Stülpnagel was Head of the Intelligence Department (T3) of the Truppenamt, April, 1933–November, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the White Paper Cmd. 5134 of 1936, containing the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> In the original the word "proposal" in German [*Vorschlag*] is followed by the English in brackets. There follows a note at this point, which reads: "This refers to the General Staff talks. v. Stülpnagel."

<sup>5</sup> The words in brackets are in English in the original.

(3) For decisions within the next few days it is, in the opinion of the British General Staff, of decisive importance that the German fortifications in the Rhineland should not in any way be offensive in character.

From the reply to a cautious enquiry on my part I gathered that bridge-heads, as such, were apparently regarded as possible, but that they must not be given the character of a base for the dreaded "*attaque brusquée* [sudden attack]".<sup>6</sup>

(4) The conversation had something of the old cordiality and frankness. The threads seem to have been gathered up again—i.e., the situation on the British side [is such as] to permit of this.

(5) In reply to my query whether Britain regarded herself as an interested party or as a mediator, I was told that this was a disputed point, but in the opinion of the Head of Section undoubtedly as a mediator.

The German Delegation is being informed.

V. GEYR  
Major General

[Enclosure 2]

*The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the  
Reich War Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, March 26, 1936.

FROM A CONFIDENTIAL SOURCE

Enclosure 1 to [Report No.] 15/36

Subject: Conversation at the War Office on March 26, 1936.

After deliberately waiting for 10 days, I called at the War Office again today.

1) Among other current questions I raised that of the Rhineland fortifications, which, in my view, has become the central point of future discussions. This view was confirmed to me.

I stressed that I would deliberately leave the political and prestige aspects out of account, but that I felt that to discuss the matter with an expert would be useful to me. On our side, I said, we held the view that German fortifications in the West would be a sure guarantee of peace. I asked to be told what was really thought of the French point of view, which constantly stressed that German fortifications in the West would merely provide cover for possible offensive moves in the East.

I was told that under this cover we would be able to overrun Poland. To this I retorted that in such a case not only would the Polish-French alliance come into operation, but that it was unlikely that Russia would

<sup>6</sup> The words in quotation marks are in French in the original.

remain a passive observer. Even if we gained a success, I said, any military operations against Russia would, in view of the size of that country, be quite senseless. Thereupon I was told, albeit without much conviction, that there was a great deal of talk about German designs on the Ukraine.

It was however pointed out to me in all seriousness that the German fortifications in the West would provide excellent cover for an attack on Austria and Czechoslovakia. To this I retorted that my own personal opinion on so weighty a matter was of no consequence; I would do my best to obtain a more authoritative reply on this question.

2) I was told that General Dill<sup>7</sup> was grateful that, in view of the critical situation, I had recently behaved with such restraint.

The British General Staff, I was told, had got themselves into a very awkward situation. They had, by way of preparation, strongly supported the remilitarization of the Rhineland on the assumption that it was bound to come about sooner or later. The intention had been to link this up with the Western Air Pact. This had now been wrecked by the German decision.

3) I asked whether any well-founded information was to hand there about the strength of the German troops in the Rhineland exceeding the figure made public by the Embassy.<sup>8</sup> The answer was in the negative. I asked to be informed if anything were received in this connection which might cause the British General Staff puzzlement.

I deliberately raised this question in order to frustrate the Franco-Belgian attempts to stir up trouble, which are undoubtedly being continued.

I was given to understand:

(a) That there could be no question of the French, behind their Maginot Line, being threatened. To my question as to whether the French there were three times as strong as the Germans, I received the somewhat hesitant reply that this was approximately so. I had the impression that the appreciably higher figure given by our Intelligence Service could be correct.<sup>9</sup>

(b) That the French have to some extent been disappointed by the White Paper.<sup>3</sup>

(c) That the French are now increasingly using the threat that Berlin is trying to reach a direct understanding with them to the exclusion of Britain. I described this as a scarecrow<sup>10</sup> put up for Britain's benefit. It was then put to me as a personal opinion

<sup>7</sup> Major General John Dill, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence in the British War Office.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 112, footnote 1.

<sup>9</sup> For a German estimate of the strength of the French forces in north-eastern France, see document No. 145, footnote 2.

<sup>10</sup> In the original, the German [*Vogelscheuche*] is followed by the English in brackets.



that such a direct understanding was a matter of complete indifference to Britain, as long as some sort of understanding came about between France and Germany. They were completely unconcerned, and they knew very well that, politically, France could not manage without Britain, nor could Britain without France.

(d) When I remarked that, in point of fact, the ordinary, decent man in the street in England had done more than anyone else to keep the crisis within bounds, I was told that this was probably true. But one should be under no illusions about this, as the present mood of public opinion could be most markedly reversed by a systematic campaign.

The manner in which, during the course of conversation, emphasis was placed on the possibility of re-forming the Stresa front I took to be something halfway between a hint and a warning. In this initial conversation I did not want to pursue this matter further, but I shall try to do so on the next occasion.

FRHR. V. GEYR  
Major General

[Enclosure 3]

*The Military Attaché in Great Britain to the  
Reich War Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, March 26, 1936.

Enclosure 3 to Report No. 15/36.

Subject: Conversation with Ambassador von Ribbentrop on the situation.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop sent for me this afternoon.

I began by submitting to him the preliminary report on my today's conversation at the War Office (see enclosure 14 to [Report No.] 14/36).<sup>11</sup>

Ambassador von Ribbentrop then suggested certain points which I might raise with the British General Staff. I was able to inform him that I had already brought these points up and that the British General Staff had evidently been in agreement with me on them.

It was, amongst other things, a matter of demonstrating that, given the relative strengths, it was grotesque to speak of a threat by Germany to France's eastern frontier. I will, of course, make this point again.

He authorized me to state that the malicious French threat to Britain, of which I had told him, namely, the allegation that Germany was making increasing efforts to reach a direct understanding with

<sup>11</sup> i.e., Enclosure 1 above.

France, was entirely out of the question in view of the basic principles of the Chancellor's policy.

Turning, in the course of conversation, to the possibility of war he remarked that "authoritative German circles" had expressed the view that in such a case only the first five kilometres would be easy. I considered it my duty to point out that it was not at all certain that any significant land attacks would be launched at first. In the event of a war against Germany in which Britain took part, it was far more probable that the strategy would be to remain on the defensive on land at first and to leave the offensive conduct of the war to the air force, the blockade and economic warfare.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop seemed to be surprised or not convinced about this possibility.

I went on to say that we ought at least to open a chink in the curtain in deference to the desire of the British General Staff (a desire which was, as I had observed for myself, quite sincere) to achieve mediation in order to escape from the coercion of the Locarno obligation. Otherwise I did not see how the British Government could extricate themselves from the commitments of the British to the French General Staff or from a reinforced Stresa front.

I refer most urgently to the letter on page 7 [of the] White Paper.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop's remarks tallied with my own firm conviction that the French do not desire an understanding at all. But, precisely for this reason, it seems to me that we ought to consider making some concession, if only slight, to which the British would then be able to point.

I said that I had no authority to make any proposals or to anticipate the opinions of my military superiors. It was, however, my duty to be informed about the attitude and/or psychosis of the Belgian and also of the Dutch General Staffs, as I was responsible for observing them.<sup>12</sup> The "*attaque brusquée*" is a perpetual nightmare to them. The French are making play with it too.

The difference between fortifications designed for the defence of Germany's western frontier—i.e., those situated for the most part on the right bank of the Rhine—and those which might cover the preparations for a major armoured [*Panzer*] offensive has been mentioned for the first time by the British General Staff.

It should perhaps be considered whether Germany might voluntarily abstain, for a fixed term or for the period of negotiations, from constructing such fortified areas on the west bank of the Rhine as might serve as points of assembly for strong armoured formations and mechanized units preparatory to a surprise offensive.

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<sup>12</sup> Geyr von Schweppenburg was Military Attaché in Belgium and in the Netherlands, as well as in Britain.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop did not appear to reject this idea *a priori*, but said he would like to discuss it with the Reich War Minister.

*Additional remarks by the Military Attaché.*

Should this last idea be turned down for political reasons or on fundamental grounds of prestige, I beg that the following suggestion of my own may be studied:

An offer, on a reciprocal basis, that British officers should be attached to each of the three German armoured formations, without which the famous "*attaque brusquée*" could not be executed.

Reciprocity could be maintained by attaching a British officer to the Belgian Ardennes Mountain Division, British officers to the French motorized divisions, and a German officer to the newly raised British armoured division.

This proposal would at one and the same time dispose of the wholly unjustified charge of alleged German "secrecy"<sup>13</sup> which is contained in the British Defence Paper<sup>14</sup> (see page 6, paragraph 12) and make it quite clear who is for "secrecy" and who is not, and who, militarily speaking, is prepared to put his cards on the table.

FRHR. VON GEYR  
Major General

<sup>13</sup> The word "secrecy" is in English in the original.

<sup>14</sup> i.e., Cmd. 4827 of 1935: *Statement relating to Defence, issued in connexion with the House of Commons Debate on March 11, 1935*; see also vol. III of this Series, document No. 517 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 232

3242/712513

*Minute by the Head of the Press Department*

[BERLIN], March 28, [1936], 10 o'clock.

[For the] St[ate] S[ecretary].

For submission to the F[oreign] M[inister].

The following directive for the press was issued by the R[eich] Prop[aganda] M[inistry] today—obviously *on higher orders*:

Eden's speech<sup>1</sup> is to be taken up once again on Sunday<sup>2</sup> and is to be treated polemically. The following points in particular are to be brought out:

(1) It is incomprehensible and insulting that aggressive intentions should always be attributed to G[ermany].

(2) In connection with the charge of a German treaty violation, attention is to be drawn to the following:

the classical breach of the 14 Points,

<sup>1</sup> Evidently Eden's speech of Mar. 26; see document No. 223 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 29.

the invasion of the Ruhr,  
the infringement of the Rhineland Statute.  
Full use is to be made of Lloyd George's arguments.<sup>3</sup>

ASCHMANN

<sup>3</sup> Evidently a reference to Lloyd George's speech of Mar. 26; see document No. 223 and footnote 8 thereto.

## No. 233

3242/712517-19

*Foreign Minister Neurath to Reich War Minister and  
Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht Blomberg*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, March 28, 1936.

With reference to your letter W.A. No. 580/36 g.K.L.Ia of March 27.<sup>1</sup>

DEAR HERR VON BLOMBERG: Thank you very much for sending me your contribution to the new Note to the British Government. I have noted what you say with interest, but should like to make the following observations:

Re (1):

The only way in which, in my opinion, we can utilize the idea that we do not wish to construct any permanent fortifications during the period of negotiation is by announcing that this is in any case the intention of the German Government, but that we must decline to assume any formal obligation because by doing so we would be countenancing a discrimination against Germany. To assume such an obligation, even if only for the interim period, would be very dangerous politically, because we should thus be abandoning the line we have taken in principle and should only increase the pressure which will doubtless be put on us to make this obligation permanent.

Re (2):

The German Government's communication of December 12, 1924<sup>2</sup> to which you refer, was superseded at the time by Annex F of the Final Protocol of Locarno.<sup>3</sup> But quite apart from this, I do not think that a declaration of the kind would be politically expedient. For one thing we should thereby be acting contrary to the view, repeatedly proclaimed by the Führer and Chancellor, that Germany must reject pacts of mutual assistance extending beyond the framework of the Western Powers. Furthermore, we should in no way achieve any particular political effect with the declaration. We should be told in reply, and not without justification, that our obligation to render assistance would

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 230.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 230, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> For the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LIV, pp. 298-301.



automatically derive from Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations as soon as we had returned to the League.

Re (3):

I have grave political misgivings with regard to the setting up of an official military commission. Here, too, there is a danger of its becoming a permanent institution. The idea underlying your suggestion could, however, be implemented in an unexceptionable way if, without assuming any strict obligation, we were to state of our own accord that we were prepared to afford to the Military Attachés of the European States accredited in Berlin the opportunity to see for themselves on the spot how matters stood in the Rhineland.

In general I should like to add that we must be very careful lest, by making offers of one kind or another, we strengthen the impression, which our opponents are striving to create, that France and Belgium are being threatened by us, and are entitled to claim compensation for the reduction in their security. We must not admit that a dangerous situation exists in any shape or form on our Western frontier, for it is precisely on this that the Locarno Powers are basing their absurd demands for an interim régime.

I have submitted a copy of your letter and of my reply to the Führer and Chancellor.<sup>4</sup>

VON NEURATH

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<sup>4</sup> Under a brief minute dated Mar. 28 (3242/712520).

## No. 234

8019/E577175-76

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL  
No. 180 of March 29

PARIS, March 29, 1936—[6:00 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received March 29—6:10 p.m.

III O 1584.

I hear the following about the French Government's attitude towards the lifting of sanctions against Italy:

The lifting of sanctions is, of course, worth striving for in itself, but it requires thorough preparation in diplomatic negotiations with the Italian Government.

1) The small States which have suffered particularly under the application of sanctions want them lifted but fear that the Italian Government might continue with their counter-measures and that the lifting of sanctions might only serve to bring about an under-

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris draft (6403/E475015-16).

standing between the Great Powers and Italy. They therefore demand that Italy should remove all counter-measures and should completely restore the situation to what it was before October of last year; the French Government will support this demand.

2) The small States want to prevent the action against Abyssinia from creating a precedent for a similar Italian action in Europe. Before sanctions are lifted, Italy must therefore clearly recognize the validity for Europe of Article 10 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. France will support this demand too.

3) The Little Entente regard it as essential that, before the abolition of sanctions, Italy should declare herself ready, in principle, to co-operate with them for a solution of the Danubian problem and to refrain from supporting Hungary's revisionist aspirations. The French Government, therefore, consider it desirable that the Italian Government should declare that they renounce any alteration in European frontiers for a period of several decades.

4) The abolition of sanctions must, it is held, lead to the restoration of the Stresa front. Since the programme of work envisaged at Stresa is no longer practicable, the Italian Government, together with France, must at once set about preparing a plan for European cooperation. It is necessary for France and Italy to prepare jointly and with the greatest care for the abolition of sanctions and the consequent diplomatic repercussions. In the French view this is also necessary in order to avoid giving the impression that the measure was due to weariness on the part of the League of Nations or perhaps merely to a magnanimous British initiative.

FORSTER

## No. 235

6680/H096401

### *Memorandum by an Official of Department III*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, March 30, 1936.

1) At a conference with the Reich War Minister on March 26, the Foreign Minister rejected, as being entirely unfounded, the reproaches made by the former in the communication of March 25 (Enclosure A)<sup>2</sup> against the German Ambassador in Nanking. It should here be observed that the Ambassador merely carried out his official instructions to pass on to Chiang Kai-shek a communication from the Reich

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed, the original of which is filed immediately after document No. 238, is marked "Enclosure 1", apparently in error. The content suggests that document No. 239 was in fact Enclosure 1 and that an earlier or undated version of it was Enclosure B, cf. footnote 4 below.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 217.

War Ministry;<sup>3</sup> when the Marshal made accusations against Klein, he put forward all the counter-arguments at his disposal and reported, as was his duty, on what had occurred. The Ambassador has hitherto been unable to carry out his instructions to afford Klein all the assistance he asks for and to help him in his Nanking plans only because Klein has deliberately avoided calling on the Embassy or on any other official persons and informing them about his plans and undertakings.

2) As regards the Reich War Ministry's request that the Foreign Ministry and the Embassy should support the implementation of Klein's plans for an exchange [of goods] by all possible means, it is above all necessary for this that we be informed about these plans. The Reich War Minister promised that Klein would make an appointment to see the Foreign Minister in the next few days and would give him the information desired.

3) The Reich War Ministry has so far furnished no reply to Chiang Kai-shek's question as to whether the military deliveries to Canton would be stopped.

A separate memorandum about the probable effects of Klein's plans (Enclosure B)<sup>4</sup> is attached.

V[oss]

<sup>3</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 552, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> Not found; see however footnote 1 above.

## No. 236

5576/E400451-55, 57

### *The High Command of the Army to the Foreign Ministry*

Gen.St.d.H., 3.Abt.Att.Gr.

BERLIN, March 30, 1936.

zu No. 284/36 geh.

Received March 31.

SECRET

II M 1063 g.

I herewith enclose a part (viz., Enclosure 6) of report No. 15/36 of March 28, 1936, from the Military Attaché in London, for your information.

By order:

V. PAPPENHEIM

[Enclosure]

SECRET

LONDON, March 28, 1936.

Subject: Conversation with General Dill.<sup>1</sup>

I had a long conversation with General Dill today. It lasted for about an hour and a quarter, had originally been fixed for Monday,<sup>2</sup> and was finally hurriedly arranged at very short notice.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 231, footnote 7.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Mar. 30.

My object was to find out what the position was regarding the Anglo-French General Staff talks and what their immediate prospects were.

I began by describing the profound psychological effect which talks of this nature would be bound to have on both the German people and the German Wehrmacht. There was hardly an educated German (I said, turning to General Dill) who did not remember the actions of one of your predecessors and their consequences (Sir Henry Wilson entered into arrangements with the French General Staff over the head of the Government). The German people and the Army would then inevitably view Britain in quite a different light, namely that of an enemy, whether this was intended or not. That would be the effect in practice.

The responsible spokesman of the British Government, Mr. Neville Chamberlain was, therefore, wrong in asserting that if Germany's intentions were peaceful she had nothing to fear from this. (Parliamentary Report of March 26, 1936, p. 1548.)<sup>3</sup>

Moreover the further consequences in practice would be:

(a) The anti-German section of British public opinion would regard this as the desired *cordon sanitaire* round Germany.

(b) The French would lose all interest in a settlement with Germany. In their left pocket they would have the Russian Pact and their agreement with the Little Entente, and in their right the talks with the British Government.

In practice what would be achieved would be the exact opposite of what was desirable, namely the pacification of, in the first place, Western Europe.

(c) There could scarcely be any doubt about the struggle the French were putting up to avoid being "winkled out"—and here I used the expression "*décrocher*" which is commonly used in the French Army.

(d) I was only entitled to express my personal opinion; the German Chancellor was not the sort of man to leave things of this kind without some political retort reply. I could therefore see no progress but only a danger for Western Europe.

(e) General Staff talks almost inevitably involved an exchange of views if not an exchange of information. What guarantee would the British General Staff have that any information they gave Paris would not immediately be passed on to Moscow? Furthermore, General Staff talks with Belgium were contemplated. The latter, whether it was denied in the Chamber or not, did maintain contact between her own and the Dutch General Staff. The British action would thus complete the circle.

General Dill replied with the caution appropriate to his position and to the relationship between the British soldier and the politicians.

<sup>3</sup> For Chamberlain's speech during the debate of Mar. 26 see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1538-1549, especially col. 1544.



Now and again, bravely accepting the risk on behalf of his General, the Head of Section said the things which it was difficult for General Dill to say himself.

General Dill stated that the main obstacles in the way of reaching a reasonable agreement, both in this case and in general, were at present national pride and mutual fear.

He had never heard anything, even in political circles, of any intention of throwing a *cordon sanitaire* round Germany. My argument, including the point that, in consequence of these General Staff talks, the French would lose interest in a settlement with Germany, seemed to impress him. *He stated categorically that no talks of any kind had so far taken place*, and that no decision had as yet been taken as to how, when and where such talks would take place.

I interposed the question as to whether he thought the odds on their taking place were today 50:50 or 90:10. After some thought General Dill replied that, from what he "gathered from the newspapers", he thought 90:10.

I followed this up and asked for information as to whether it was a question of talks limited as to time and place, in other words whether they would be concerned only with a fairly short period of time and a limited area of Europe.

General Dill replied: "preliminary<sup>4</sup> talks" and Colonel Paget<sup>5</sup> later amplified this into "temporary".<sup>6</sup> What they meant was talks for the duration of the negotiations, as was explicitly stated.

I objected that this must be taken to mean that military pressure would be brought to bear on Germany during the negotiations; in other words, that the big stick was being kept handy. I could only expect this to produce once again, the opposite effect; though it might be a somewhat milder form of the Versailles method of negotiating, it would not be a case of free parties possessing equal rights sitting round the same table.

Colonel Paget supplemented what had been said by remarking that it was a question of talks of a purely defensive nature to cover the case of a German attack on France or Belgium during the negotiations.

After we had left the room he indicated that, from the British point of view, what mattered was primarily Belgium. I emphasized how important it was that a full and constant exchange of information on politico-military decisions should take place, either through the British Military Attaché<sup>7</sup> in Berlin or through me, provided that this were permitted by higher authority on both sides.

General Dill added the following observation in a tactful manner: It

<sup>4</sup> In the original, the German [*vorläufige*] is followed by the English in brackets.

<sup>5</sup> Col. Bernard Paget, General Staff Officer in the War Office.

<sup>6</sup> The word "temporary" is in English in the original.

<sup>7</sup> Col. F. E. Hotblack.

should be clearly realized in Germany how much more painful the shock<sup>8</sup> had been for the British General Staff, which had warmly and sincerely advocated the fair and just treatment of Germany and whose every future argument in defence of legitimate German interests had in practice been destroyed or prejudiced. He asked me whether I did not think that Britain had throughout been at pains to adopt a fair and moderate attitude in this political crisis. To this I replied in the affirmative, also stressing the moderation shown by the Belgian Minister President.

General Dill concluded by saying—and this was perhaps one of the most important points if not the crux of his remarks—that the British *man in the street* felt sympathetic towards the Chancellor and the German people. But he thought he could definitely say that the elections, whatever their result,<sup>9</sup> it would not make any impression at all on the man in the street. He heard it suggested, time and over again, also from abroad, that Germany was relying on making an impression on the man in the street in order to influence the decisions of the Governments of other countries. Where Britain was concerned, he regarded this as being completely out of the question. On the contrary, the average Englishman was at the present moment anxious to give the Germans a helping hand. If the Chancellor responded to this in a manner psychologically comprehensible to the British people, the man in the street would say: Let him be what he will—after all he is a fine fellow.<sup>10</sup>

A completely intransigent attitude on Germany's part would not be understood by the British and would have exactly the opposite effect upon the masses.

General Dill is the leading, and in my view by far the best, brain on the British General Staff. He is, like Paget, well known in the highest quarters of the German Army. I had the distinct impression that, for at least 50 per cent over and above his duty he was speaking as a sincere friend of Germany.

He received with obvious satisfaction the statement which I made on instructions from Ambassador von Ribbentrop,<sup>11</sup> that the leading political personages in Germany had no intention whatsoever of trying to drive a wedge between France and Britain, and the remarks I made in amplification of this.

I would request that my superiors consider whether this report would be suitable for immediate submission to the Führer and Chancellor.

<sup>8</sup> In the original the German [*Stoss*] is followed by the English in brackets.

<sup>9</sup> Evidently a reference to the German elections which took place on Mar. 29.

<sup>10</sup> In the original the German [*aber er ist doch ein famoser Kerl*] is followed by the English in brackets.

<sup>11</sup> See document No. 231, enclosure 3.

## No. 237

5753/H040643-44

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, March 31, 1936.

II It. 382.

The Hungarian Minister, who called on me yesterday, enquired as to the impression made upon us by the conversations between Mussolini, Gömbös and Schuschnigg, and in particular by the agreement supplementing the Rome Protocol[s] which had been concluded.<sup>1</sup> He pointed out that, according to his information, M. de Kánya had already fully informed us through Herr von Hassell<sup>2</sup> and Herr von Mackensen.<sup>3</sup> Hungary hoped that the new agreement would strengthen her political position in the Danubian region *vis-à-vis* the Little Entente, and above all *vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

I told the Minister in reply that of course we welcomed any increase in the political strength of Hungary, bound as she was to us by friendly ties, in the Danubian region. But it was natural that we should regard the agreements concluded in Rome primarily under the following three aspects: In the first place, we asked ourselves whether our legitimate interests in the Danubian region would be in any way affected thereby. We then asked ourselves whether the understanding with Austria desired by us would be rendered more difficult or easier. Finally, we asked ourselves whether there had been imposed on Hungary any commitments which might render it more difficult for her to continue in her previous course of friendship towards Germany. In all these three questions M. de Kánya had assured Herr von Hassell and Herr von Mackensen that our interests would be in no wise impaired. We had taken note of these statements with satisfaction.

The Minister then came to speak of the attitude adopted by the Italians at the international negotiations on the remilitarization of the Rhineland, and observed that he had remarked great dissatisfaction over Italy's policy, particularly in Party circles. I confirmed that the Italian attitude had greatly disappointed us. The fact, amongst other things, that Grandi had not hesitated to collaborate in drawing up the London Memorandum, had come as a particularly unpleasant surprise.<sup>4</sup>

RENTHE-FINK

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 165, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 204.

<sup>3</sup> Reported in despatch A 73 P 51 of Mar. 27 (5753/H040612-15).

<sup>4</sup> See also documents Nos. 170 and 174.

## No. 238

6680/H096398-400

*Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department III*

BERLIN, March 31, 1936.

IV Chi. 553.

The attached Memorandum by Counsellor Voss (Enclosure 1)<sup>1</sup> deals primarily with the probable effects of Klein's plans in the economic sphere (uncertainty of the repayment of the revolving 100 million credit in view of the bad state of Chinese finances and the unsettled political situation, exclusion of the German Far East firms, etc.).

Politically, attention must be drawn to the possibility that the Klein plans will do serious damage to German-Japanese relations. As can be seen from the attached telegrams from the German Embassy in Tokyo (Enclosure 2),<sup>2</sup> the Japanese Government protest against *general* financial aid being granted to China. It is known to us from confidential information how careful the British are to agree beforehand with the Japanese about everything they do in China, although their position in China is much more stable than ours. If the Japanese are regarding even the granting of financial aid to China by other Powers as an unfriendly act, it seems even more doubtful whether they will quietly acquiesce in the equipment of the Chinese Army with war materials on a scale as large as is apparently intended under the Klein plans or in the installation of war industries in China, particularly since we would thereby, in conjunction with the activities of the German Advisory Staff in Nanking, be making it possible for the Chinese to intervene in a Russo-Japanese war on the side of the Soviet Union against Japan.

The Reich War Ministry has requested the Foreign Ministry<sup>3</sup> to forward to its destination the letter enclosed under a flying seal, from the Minister of War to General of Infantry von Falkenhausen, dated March 25 (Enclosure 3).<sup>4</sup> This cannot be done until April 14, when the next courier leaves.

The second paragraph of this letter, which reads:

"Both the Foreign Minister and the Reich Minister of Economics are convinced of the expediency of this plan and are working on its implementation",

probably does not, in this form, correspond to the facts, since the Foreign Ministry has not been asked for its views on the content and

<sup>1</sup> Presumably document No. 239; see also document No. 235, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted (6680/H096402-03); these were extracts from telegrams Nos. 53 and 54 of Apr. 19, 1934, see vol. II of this Series, document No. 408, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 217.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed; see document No. 217, footnote 2.



modalities of the Klein plan. Instructions have been issued in the Reich Ministry of Economics to hold aloof from the Klein plans and to attribute the responsibility for them solely to the Reich War Ministry.<sup>5</sup> The statement in the final paragraph of the letter, that the deals hitherto concluded by Klein (Hapro) with Canton are also subject to the supervision of the Reich War Minister and are being carried out in agreement with Chiang Kai-shek, is in contradiction to representations made by the latter to Ambassador Trautmann (compare telegrams Nos. 52 and 54 from Nanking (Enclosures 4 and 5))<sup>6</sup>.

Herewith respectfully submitted to  
the State Secretary  
via Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff.

V. ERDMANNSDORFF

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<sup>5</sup> This sentence has been added in an unidentified handwriting.

<sup>6</sup> Not reprinted (6680/H096404-07), see document No. 156 and footnote 5 thereto.

## No. 239

6680/H096389-97

### *Memorandum by an Official of Department III*

BERLIN, March 31, 1936.

As early as February of last year<sup>1</sup> the Foreign Ministry informed the departments concerned that, in connection with the Klein project, they most warmly advocated and supported the utilization of all opportunities of obtaining raw materials, especially those required for defence purposes, in exchange for German industrial products. Such support, however, also requires that the difficulties which are likely to arise in carrying out such plans should be recognized and removed in good time. Precautions of this kind are all the more indicated where plans for the exchange of goods take on such proportions that they cannot but affect the commercial relations of both countries in their entirety. Where the Klein projects are concerned the following is the case: As far as is known, the credit agreement with Nanking provides for a revolving credit of 100 million Marks, which is to be offset by deliveries of Chinese raw materials and is to be replenished as these deliveries are made; in contrast to this our normal annual exports to China in the years 1932 to 1935 averaged only 82 million Marks (90.5 in 1935) while our imports from China amounted to 52 million Marks (56 in 1935). It may therefore definitely be expected that the 100 million revolving credit will profoundly affect our normal trade relations with China and will result in considerable redistributions and frictions. To these the

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 508.

Foreign Ministry must draw attention in good time if they do not wish to lay themselves open, as has happened before,<sup>2</sup> to suspicion that these inevitable difficulties have been caused by a lack of official support.

(1) The Nanking Government enjoy no credit abroad. As became apparent once again at the time of the Chinese currency reform in December of last year<sup>3</sup> and from the rumours then rife of a British currency loan in London, it is not possible to place a Nanking Government loan on the international money markets, nor has any attempt been made to do so. Leith-Ross is aiming, by means of negotiations on the service of the old railway loans which are in default, to improve China's credit in order perhaps later on to make a loan possible. The only major credit which the Nanking Government have obtained abroad since they came into being, is the "wheat and cotton loan"<sup>4</sup> which T. V. Sung concluded in America after the great flood catastrophe in the Yangtse valley in June 1933. This credit, which was originally fixed at 50 million American dollars, but which has, in the meanwhile, been reduced to 20 million American dollars, was designed to lighten the strain on the American stocks of raw materials. It is covered by the best security which China has to offer, namely, increases in the maritime tolls. The Nanking Government have so far not been able to obtain any *unsecured* loans or credits at all abroad.

It will not be possible to prevent the German-Chinese Credit Agreement, however much it may be treated as secret, from gradually becoming known after all, either through Chinese indiscretions, or through the inevitable repercussions on the nations competing with Germany in China. It is to be expected that these nations will then be considerably disturbed. In this connection one may recall the agitation which the mere rumour of a British currency loan to Japan called forth. The Japanese views on such loans and credits are known from the Hirota statement of April 1934. Copies of two relevant telegrams from the Embassy in Tokyo are attached.<sup>5</sup>

It must be expected that an unsecured credit of 100 million will at once create considerable disquiet, *in our own economic relations with China too*: the China Consortium (Stahlunion, Ferrostaal, Krupp, Otto Wolff), Otto Wolff (for instance in connection with the Chang sha-Kweiyang Railway), Siemens China, and other large firms who supply the Chinese Government on credit, are engaged in difficult negotiations on the furnishing of the necessary *securities* (through tax revenues, bank guarantees and the like). If the Nanking Government are now enabled by means of the Klein credits to obtain the supplies which they require without providing securities, these German firms will not be able to

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series document No. 517.

<sup>3</sup> Actually of Nov. 3, 1935. See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 433, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> The words in quotation marks are in English in the original.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 238, footnote 2.

conclude their negotiations and will have to abandon the transaction. The same will apply to the German firms trading with China [*China-Firmen*] who rely for a large part of their profits on governmental business, for they do not earn enough from the sale of articles of mass consumption to cover their overheads and a Chinese private industry providing a worthwhile market does not yet exist.

In this connection reference may be made to Minister Kiep's report of March 14:<sup>6</sup> "The Vice Minister for Railways of the Nanking Government requested a consultation to discuss the possibility of increasing German industrial deliveries, at which he drew attention to the Chinese Government's increasing financial difficulties and recommended the conclusion of a general compensation treaty between the two Governments." In a telegram from Nanking of February 15, 1935<sup>7</sup> (IV Chi. 324) Colonel General von Seeckt expressed himself in similar terms about a conversation with Marshal Chiang Kai-shek: "Chiang Kai-shek . . . expressed the wish that the Government might establish one office in Germany through which all business with China should pass, thus excluding private German firms from any direct negotiations with the Chinese. I regard this request as being worthy of very serious consideration."

Although Herr Klein assured us here in February of last year<sup>8</sup> that he by no means intended to exclude the firms trading with China, it is nevertheless in the nature of things that, however much he may intend to bring them in, he cannot usefully include them in his organization. If the Governments are, from the start, in the position of buyer and seller, if the credit conditions have been laid down and the prices of the deliveries fixed by a special semi-official organization (which is to be set up with the AGK), there is no room for any commercial activity on the part of the firms trading with China.

In order to reserve for the private firms a share in the Chinese Government transactions, it might be for consideration that the deliveries under the Klein Credit Agreement should be limited to army equipment and the like. But, were this done, what would be improved from the economic point of view would be harmed from the political point of view. (The Japanese attitude to arms deliveries to China.)

2. The 100 million credit is to be offset by the Chinese Government by means of deliveries of raw materials to Germany.

(a) The Chinese Government are, however, not in the same position as the Russian Government who are able freely to dispose of the raw materials of their country. The Chinese Government are compelled

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (6680/H096377-78). Kiep was the Head of the German Economic Mission to East Asia. See Editors' Note, p. 499, and vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 782.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 493.

<sup>8</sup> Presumably during his visit to the Foreign Ministry, see vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 472 and 508, footnote 1.



to purchase the raw materials which they require. The Chinese financial situation is the Finance Minister's anxious secret; all that is commonly known about it is that it is poor. As emerges from Minister Kiep's telegram, cited above, Chinese Government circles are expecting increasing financial difficulties. It is therefore doubtful whether the Chinese Government can find the means with which to obtain the raw materials which they require to offset the German credits.

(b) So far, China has not produced any large surplus in raw materials. In 1934 the total Chinese exports amounted to 535 million dollars (455 million Marks) and in 1935 to 576 million dollars (513 million Marks).

In 1934 German imports from China amounted to 48.5 million Marks and in 1935 to 56.2 million Marks.

In 1934 these imports fell into the following categories of goods to values of over 1 million Marks:

Buckwheat . . . .	1.6 million Marks		
Groundnuts . . . .	7	"	"
Hempseed . . . .	2.5	"	"
Raw Tobacco . . . .	1	"	"
Herbs etc. (for ordinary use)	1.4	"	"
Yolk of Egg . . . .	4.2	"	"
Feathers for Bedding . .	2.5	"	"
Bristles . . . .	2.7	"	"
Ox Hides . . . .	1.8	"	"
Goat and Sheep Skins . .	1.8	"	"
Gut . . . .	3.1	"	"
Wood Oil . . . .	4.5	"	"
Wolfram Ore . . . .	3.5	"	"
White of Egg (dried) . .	2.2	"	"
Tin . . . .	2	"	"
Antimony . . . .	.7	"	"

From the point of view of economic defence policy the important items here are wolfram, tin and antimony, to a joint value of 6.2 million Marks.

This survey shows that there are only a few categories of goods which we import from China in large quantities. In consequence of the relatively small amounts which the Chinese have to offer, we shall have to fear price increases if we suddenly appear in the Chinese market as buyers on a greatly enlarged scale.

The German firms trading with China, whose existence depends on the one hand on governmental transactions and on the other on opportunities for compensation transactions involving Chinese products, would in this way also be undermined, for if Chinese prices were to increase to any large extent, they would no longer be able to compete with similar products from other countries of origin.



(c) Since, in view of the above, there is a lack of Chinese raw materials suitable for offsetting our credits, Herr Klein has proposed that the necessary raw materials should be obtained by cultivation or exploitation, in particular by starting up mining works. When asked to whether there existed promising deposits of ores of a nature to be of interest to us, Klein replied in February of last year<sup>8</sup> that a commission of experts was to be sent out that summer to make the necessary investigations, and that it was already known that there were promising deposits of molybdenum, tin and other ores of importance to us.

It is not known here whether the Commission has in the meanwhile reported and what prospects, according to this report, there are.

Should there in fact prove to be worthwhile deposits of the ores which we require, then the difficulty entailed by the poor financial position of the Chinese Government would in the main be removed, since the Government are able freely to dispose of mineral wealth and since labour is cheap.

With regard to the repayment of the Chinese debts, there would still be, however, the following uncertainty, even should the mining projects come up to expectations: Will the Chinese Government, if they are beset with grave financial difficulties, supply the ores, much coveted elsewhere, to us in order to offset their debts, or will they supply them to other buyers from whom they would obtain cash payment? The question is justified since we have, for instance in the case of the Chinghsin mines or of the antimony transactions with the Hunan Government, already had some unpleasant experiences in this respect. There is the further consideration that the cultivation or exploitation of new raw materials requires considerable time. During this period there might occur, quite apart from economic and technical risks, all kinds of political events which could destroy the position of Chiang Kai-shek or of the Nanking Government.

It may be even harder to obtain the necessary raw materials by the cultivation of agricultural produce than by the exploitation of minerals. For, in contrast to the agriculturally new land of Manchuria, China is an area which requires agricultural imports. During the last three years China has, on an average, imported 175 million dollars' worth of rice and corn yearly, and 76 million dollars' worth of raw cotton; as regards oil seeds, in 1935 China exported 19.5 million dollars' worth of groundnuts, 2.7 million dollars' worth of apricot kernels, 16.5 million dollars' worth of sesame seeds, and 10 million dollars' worth of other seeds; but, on the other hand, no soya beans at all.

In the opinion of the experts it will not be possible to intensify Chinese agriculture, since, in view of the distribution of population and the system of land tenure [*Bodenverfassung*], the present agricultural methods already represent the optimum exploitation. In view of the extremely conservative outlook of the Chinese peasants and the

weakness of the local administrations, which have so far scarcely concerned themselves with other administrative tasks than those of maintaining law and order and gathering taxes, an attempt to switch large territories over to new methods would meet with difficulties which could not be overcome in the foreseeable future.

Voss

## No. 240

769/270929

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht  
to the Commanders in Chief of the Army and Navy, the  
Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief  
of the Luftwaffe, and the Wehrmachtamt<sup>1</sup>*

No. 2052/36 J Ia.

BERLIN, March 31, 1936.

II M 1125 g.

Subject: Frontier violations.

With reference to my directive No. 550/36 g.L.<sup>2</sup> of March 19, 1936, I forbid, until further notice, all soldiers and Wehrmacht officials *in uniform* to enter a 5-kilometre zone along the French, Belgian and Czech frontiers. No such zone will exist where the German-French frontier is formed by the Rhine. In this area, however, it is forbidden to set foot on the Rhine bridges.

Exceptions to the above require the approval of the appropriate local area headquarters. In garrison towns which lie less than 5 kilometres from the frontier, the Station Commander will issue the necessary instructions for preventing the frontier from being crossed as a result of negligence, at the same time informing the area headquarters.

Men proceeding on leave into areas near the frontier are to be given [appropriate] instructions before commencing their leave.

VON BLOMBERG

<sup>1</sup> The copy here printed was transmitted to the Foreign Ministry on Apr. 4 under the reference No. 1516/Ausl. VIII.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 160.

## No. 241

M203/M006560-61

*The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Luxemburg*

BERLIN, March 31, 1936.

Sent April 7.

zu II Lux. 92.<sup>1</sup>II Lux. 93.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your reports A IV 1 c 5 of March 14, 1936<sup>1</sup> and A IV a 1 c 5 of March 20, 1936.<sup>2</sup>

As things are at present we have at the moment no cause to go more closely into the question of whether Luxemburg should be included amongst those States with which we are prepared, on the basis of our Memorandum of March 7, 1936, to conclude non-aggression pacts. At a moment when further political developments cannot yet be foreseen we must avoid as far as possible committing ourselves prematurely in one direction or the other. Moreover, the special position of the Grand Duchy under international law must be taken into account when considering this question. This position is, as is known, not clear, since differences of opinion exist on the question of the maintenance of the neutralization of Luxemburg, which have a bearing especially on the relationship between Luxemburg and the League of Nations.<sup>3</sup> Apart from this it would, in view of Luxemburg's dependence on Belgium, appear doubtful whether a non-aggression pact could provide a sufficient guarantee that Luxemburg would withstand the efforts of France and Belgium to draw her into the common military front against Germany.

Should you, therefore, find it impossible to avoid a discussion about a non-aggression pact, it would be desirable for you to confine yourself to listening and, if necessary, to asking in your turn whether the conclusion of a non-aggression pact would be compatible with the treaty status of the country and with the permanent neutrality which, as far as is known here, is still claimed by the Grand-Ducal Government.

By order:

BÜLOW

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (M203/M006534-37); in this Podewils reported on reactions in Luxemburg to the German Memorandum of Mar. 7 (for which see document No. 3, enclosure).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (M203/M006551-53).

<sup>3</sup> The legal aspect was the subject of a memorandum dated Mar. 19, by Senior Counselor Barandon of Department V (M203/M006542-45).

## No. 242

6710/E508512-16

*Note to the British Government*<sup>1</sup>

PEACE PLAN OF THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT OF MARCH 31, 1936,  
HANDLED TO THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BY  
AMBASSADOR VON RIBBENTROP  
ON APRIL 1, 1936.

It was with hearty approval that the German Government learnt from Ambassador von Ribbentrop that it is the wish of the British Government and the British people to begin as soon as possible the practical work for a real pacification of Europe. This desire is in full accord with the inmost intentions and hopes of the German people and their leaders. The German Government therefore regret all the more that they are unable to recognise in the draft submitted to them by the representatives of the Locarno Powers on the 20th March<sup>2</sup> a serviceable and fruitful basis for the initiation and carrying out of such a genuine work of peace. In the eyes of the German people and of their Government, this draft lacks that spirit of understanding of the laws of honour and equality of status which at all times in the life of the peoples constitutes the primary condition for the conclusion of free, and thus sacred, treaties.

2. The German Government believe that they owe it to the seriousness of the task with which they are faced to limit to the most essential points their statement of the negative aspects of the memorandum presented to them. They will, however, endeavour, by amplifying and clarifying the proposals made by them on the 7th March,<sup>3</sup> to facilitate the beginning of concrete work to secure European peace.

3. The German Government must make the following fundamental statements in order to make it comprehensible why they rejected

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<sup>1</sup> The document here printed is in English in the original; a marginal note in an unidentified handwriting reads: "English translation of the German Peace Plan, prepared in the Foreign Office." It was transmitted to Berlin under cover of the London Embassy's report A 1422 of Apr. 1 (6710/E508511), in which it is described as "the official English translation". The text, however, differs somewhat from that subsequently published by the British Government as No. 2 in British White Paper, Cmd. 5175 of 1936. A draft of the Peace Plan, in German (3242/712527-43), bears minor corrections in Neurath's handwriting. In the Delegation's telegram No. 1 of Apr. 1 (6710/E508452) Dieckhoff reported that the text of the Peace Plan which Ribbentrop was communicating to Eden that morning differed in some points from the draft and that an English translation was also being communicated. An English translation of this draft, in the files of the German Delegation in London (M319/M013314-32), bears a number of alterations, in Interpreter Schmidt's handwriting, to the text; alterations of substance are noted below. Neither in the English translation nor in the fair copy in German (6710/E508742-57) does the numbering of the paragraphs coincide with that in the document here printed.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.



various discriminatory points, as well as to explain the reasons for their constructive proposals:

4. The German Government have just received from the German people, among other things, a solemn general mandate<sup>4</sup> to represent the Reich and the German nation along the following two lines:

- (1) The German people are determined to preserve under all circumstances their freedom, their independence and thus their equality of status. They regard the advocacy of these natural international principles of State life as a precept of national honour and as a necessary condition for any practical co-operation between the nations, from which they can under no circumstances make any further departure.
- (2) The German people most sincerely desire to co-operate with all their might in the great work of a general reconciliation and understanding between the European nations, for the purpose of safeguarding for this continent that peace which is so necessary for its culture and its welfare.

5. These are the desires of the German people and therefore the obligation of the German Government.<sup>5</sup>

6. The German Government would further wish to make the following observations in pursuance of their fundamental attitude, as already stated in their preliminary note of the 24th March, 1936:<sup>6</sup>

- (a) In the year 1918 Germany concluded the armistice, which was based on the fourteen points of President Wilson. These did not contemplate any manner of limitation of German sovereignty in the Rhineland. On the contrary, the main principle on which these points were based was the construction of a new international order, which should lead to a better and permanent peace. It was to do the fullest justice to the principle of self-determination, and without regard to victor or vanquished!
- (b) The British Foreign Minister, in his speech of the 26th March<sup>7</sup> on the subject of the demilitarised zone, stated that in the last analysis this was only a *quid pro quo* for the attempt made by France in 1918 to separate the Rhineland from Germany. From this statement it is clear that the demilitarised zone came into being solely as the result of an already perpetrated breach of an obligation which was binding on the Allies too.

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<sup>4</sup> Elections for the Reichstag had taken place on Mar. 29.

<sup>5</sup> In the English translation in the Delegation's files (see footnote 1 above) this paragraph originally read: "These are the desires of the German people, which are therefore binding on the German Government, and from which they can under no circumstances depart." The last nine words were subsequently deleted.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 207.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 223, and footnote 1 thereto.

- (c) The demilitarisation provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were accordingly based on the breach of an assurance made to Germany, and the sole legal argument to back them was force. These provisions of the Treaty of Versailles were incorporated in the Locarno Pact after a further infringement of right, namely, the occupation of the Ruhr Territory, which was characterised as a breach of law by British law officers of the Crown.
- (d) The so-called "voluntary renunciation" of sovereignty on the part of Germany over these western provinces of the Reich is thus a result of the dictated Treaty of Versailles, and of a sequence of severe acts of oppression suffered by the German people as a result of that treaty. In this connexion special reference must be made to the terrible distress and helplessness of the Reich in consequence of the occupation of the Rhineland.

7. If therefore the British Government now declare that there has certainly been a question of a dictated Treaty of Versailles, but never of a dictated Treaty of Locarno, the German Government must answer by putting this question: "Was there ever or could there ever be a great nation in the world which has voluntarily, and, without any pressure from outside, renounced, or would renounce, its sovereign rights unilaterally, and in this case, abandon the most primitive right of defending its own frontiers?"

8. Nevertheless, the German nation has tolerated such a state of affairs for 17 years, and as late as the 21st May, 1935, the German Chancellor declared<sup>8</sup> that "the German Government regard the demilitarised zone as an exceedingly onerous contribution to be made by a sovereign State for the pacification of Europe" and that the Government of the Reich "will observe all the obligations arising out of the Locarno Treaty so long as the other parties to the treaty are willing to keep it."

9. The German Government, in their preliminary note of the 24th March, 1936, called attention to the fact that the military treaty concluded by France with Soviet Russia deprived the Locarno Treaty of its legal and especially its political basis and thus of the conditions for its existence. It is superfluous to go into detail in this matter again because there is no doubt that the tendency to involve Europe in a network of military alliances is contrary to the spirit and the sense of the establishment of a real community of nations. The great danger is increasing that out of this general entanglement in military alliances a situation will arise which will be similar to that to which was principally due the outbreak of the world's most frightful and most senseless war.

10. It is not now within the power of a single Government to prevent

<sup>8</sup> In his speech to the Reichstag, see vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

such a development originated by certain Great Powers, *but it is the duty of every Government within the limits of its own sovereign power to guard itself against those surprises which might arise out of such impene-trable European military and Cabinet policies.*

11. The German Government have therefore, in view of the present situation, which signifies the abrogation of the legal and political bases and assumptions of the Locarno Pact, for their part, declared themselves to be no longer bound by the said pact, and have restored the sovereignty of the Reich over the entire territory of the Reich.

12. The German Government are not in the position to submit the measure which they have adopted for the security of the Reich, and which involves *only German territory* and is a menace to no one, to the appreciation of a body which, in the most favourable case, is only in a position to judge the legal aspect of the measure, but under no circumstances whatsoever its political aspects. This is all the more true, inasmuch the Council of the League of Nations have already arrived at a decision prejudicing the legal judgment of the question.

13. The German Government are further convinced that such a verdict could not only make no positive contribution to a constructive solution of the question of European security, but rather would be calculated to make such a solution more difficult, if not to prevent it entirely.<sup>9</sup>

14. Furthermore, either one believes in the possibility of securing a general European peace, in which case such an intended interference in the sovereign rights of a State can only aggravate matters, or one does not believe in such a possibility of securing peace, in which case such a decision would at the best only have a *post factum* juridical significance.

15. The German Government, therefore, on this point as well as on the others contained in the draft proposal of the representatives of the Locarno Powers, which are without exception unilaterally onerous to Germany, not only cannot see any advantageous contribution for a truly broad and constructive solution of the question of European security, but can only see at the best elements of discrimination against a great nation, which thus make any permanent peace questionable.

16. In accordance with the mission entrusted them by the German people, the German Government must decline all proposals in the draft which impose one-sided burdens on Germany and therefore discriminate against her.

<sup>9</sup> The English translation in the Delegation's files (see footnote 1 above) here contained an additional sentence: "No great Power can recognize the verdict of a tribunal outside its own sovereignty, entailing obligations in connection with a national decision within the limits of their sovereignty." This sentence was deleted and replaced by: "For no nation can acquiesce in binding decisions being taken on unilateral discriminatory limitations of its sovereignty within its own territory, and thereby on such vital questions of national policy, taken by way of a juridical procedure by an outside international tribunal." This alternative was subsequently also deleted.



17. As is obvious from her offer, Germany has no intention of ever attacking France or Belgium. And, taking into consideration France's colossal armaments and the enormous fortresses on her Eastern frontier, it is well known that such an attack would be senseless from the purely military point of view alone.

18. For these reasons also, the desire of the French Government for immediate General Staff discussions is incomprehensible to the German Government. The latter would regard it only as seriously prejudicial if such arrangements between General Staffs were arrived at before the conclusion of the new security pacts. They are of the opinion that such arrangements would in any case only take place as a result of the political obligations of the five Locarno Powers to render assistance, and then only on strictly reciprocal grounds.

19. The German Government are further of the opinion that to arrive at an easier solution of the present complex of problems, these must be appropriately divided up according to the aims in view. They must then put the following fundamental questions:

Towards what goal is European diplomacy going to direct its efforts?

(a) Is this goal to be that division of Europe which has already shown itself to be unsuitable for any lasting guarantee of peace, a division of the European nations into those with more or less rights, into honourable and dishonourable nations, free or fettered peoples, to be maintained or continued in some new forms or other or with modifications?

Impelled by such a desire, does European diplomacy further intend to aim at conclusions on past events, based on mere majority decisions, and to pronounce sentences in order to find those legal grounds, apparently still lacking, for continuing this former state of affairs?  
Or—

(b) Are the Governments of Europe going to direct their efforts towards achieving at all costs a really constructive state of affairs amongst the nations of Europe, and thus arrive at a lasting and secure form of peace?

20. The German Government owe it to their people to declare plainly here that they will only participate in the second attempt, which, in their opinion is the only constructive one, and moreover they make this declaration with the profoundest possible conviction and with the whole weight of the sincere will and yearning of the people behind them.

21. The German Government believe that the task confronting the statesmen of Europe should then be divided into three periods as follows:

(a) A period during which the atmosphere is gradually calming, for elucidating the procedure for the negotiations which are to be initiated.



- (b) A period for the actual negotiations for securing the peace of Europe.
  - (c) A later period for dealing with those desirable supplements to the work of peace in Europe, which cannot and should not be exactly determined or limited as to contents or scope from the very beginning. (Questions of disarmament, economics, etc.)
22. To this end the German Government propose the following peace plan:
- (1) In order to give the future agreements to ensure the peace of Europe the character of inviolable treaties, those nations participating in the negotiations shall do so only on an entirely equal footing, and as equally esteemed members. The sole compelling reason for signing these treaties can only lie in the generally recognised and obvious suitability of these agreements for the peace of Europe, and thus for the social happiness and the economic prosperity of the nations.
  - (2) In order to abbreviate, as far as possible, the period of uncertainty, in the economic interests of the European nations, the German Government propose a limit of four months for the first period, up to the signature of the non-aggression pacts, and thus covering a guaranteed European peace.
  - (3) The German Government give the assurance that they will not undertake any reinforcement whatsoever to the troops in the Rhineland during this period, always provided that the Belgian and French Governments act similarly.
  - (4) The German Government give the assurance that they will not move during this period the troops at present stationed in the Rhineland closer to the Belgian and French frontiers.<sup>10</sup>
  - (5) The German Government propose to set up a commission composed of representatives of the two guarantor Powers, England and Italy, and of a disinterested third neutral Power, to guarantee these assurances to be given by both parties,
  - (6) Germany, Belgium and France are each entitled to send a representative to this commission. If Germany, Belgium and France think that, for any particular reason, they can point to a change in the military situation having taken place within this period of four months, they have the right to inform the Guarantee Commission of what they have observed.
  - (7) Germany, Belgium and France declare their willingness, in such a case, to permit this commission to make the necessary investigations through the British and Italian Military Attachés, and to report thereon to the Powers participating.

<sup>10</sup> This paragraph did not originally form part of the English translation in the Delegation's files (see footnote 1 above), but is an insertion written by hand on notepaper of the Carlton Hotel, London (M319/M013324).

- (8) Germany, Belgium and France give the assurance that they will give the fullest consideration to the objections arising therefrom.
- (9) Moreover, the German Government are willing, on the basis of complete reciprocity, to agree with their two Western neighbours to any military limitation of the German Western frontier.
- (10) Germany, Belgium and France and the two guarantor Powers agree to enter into discussions, under the leadership of the British Government, at once, or at the latest after the French election, for the conclusion of a twenty-five years' non-aggression or security pact between France and Belgium on the one hand and Germany on the other.
- (11) Germany agrees that Great Britain and Italy shall once more sign this security pact as guarantor Powers.
- (12) Should special obligations to render military assistance arise as a result of these security agreements, Germany for her part declares her willingness to assume such obligations also.
- (13) The German Government hereby repeat the proposal for the conclusion of an air pact to supplement and reinforce these security agreements.
- (14) The German Government repeat that, should the Netherlands so desire, they are willing to include this State also in this Western European security agreement.
- (15) In order to stamp this peace pact, voluntarily entered into between Germany on the one hand and France on the other, with the character of a reconciliatory settlement of centuries-old variance, Germany and France shall pledge themselves to see that in the education of the young people of both countries, as well as in publications, everything is avoided which might be calculated to poison the relationship between the two peoples, whether it be the adoption of a derogatory or contemptuous attitude, or improper interference in the internal affairs of the other country. They shall agree to set up, at the headquarters of the League of Nations in Geneva, a joint commission whose function it shall be to submit to the two Governments, for their information and investigation, all complaints received.
- (16) In pursuance of their intention to give this agreement the character of a sacred pledge, Germany and France shall undertake to ratify it by means of a plebiscite of the two nations themselves.
- (17) Germany expresses her willingness, for her part, to enter into communication with the States on her south-eastern and north-eastern frontiers, with a view to invite them directly to conclude the non-aggressive pacts proposed.

- (18) Germany expresses her willingness to re-enter the League of Nations either at once or after the conclusion of these agreements. At the same time, the German Government again express their expectation that, within a reasonable time and by means of friendly negotiations, the question of colonial equality of rights, and that of the separation of the Covenant of the League of Nations from its Versailles setting will be cleared up.
- (19) Germany proposes the constitution of an international court of arbitration, which shall have competence in respect of the observance of the various agreements concluded, and whose decisions shall be binding on all parties.

22. [*sic*] After the conclusion of this great work of securing European peace, the German Government consider it urgently necessary to endeavour by practical measures to make attempts to check unlimited competition in armaments. In their opinion this would mean not merely an alleviation of the financial and economic position of the nations, but above all a psychological *détente*.

23. The German Government, however, have no faith in the attempt to bring about universal settlements, which would be doomed to failure from the outset and can therefore be proposed only by those who have no interest in achieving practical results. They believe, on the other hand, that the negotiations held and the results achieved in the sphere of the limitation of naval armaments can have an instructive and stimulating effect.

24. The German Government therefore propose that conferences be convened in the future having each time one clearly defined objective only.

25. They consider that the task of most immediate importance is to bring aerial warfare into the moral and humane atmosphere of the protection afforded to non-combatants or the wounded by the Geneva Convention.<sup>11</sup> Just as the killing of defenceless wounded, or prisoners, or the use of dum-dum bullets, or the waging of submarine warfare without warning, have been restricted or forbidden by international conventions, so it must be possible for civilised humanity to prevent the senseless abuse of new types of weapons without running counter to the object for which the war is waged.

26. The German Government therefore propose as the immediate practical tasks of these conferences—

- (1) The prohibition of the dropping of gas, poisonous or incendiary bombs.

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<sup>11</sup> i.e., the series of conventions for humanizing warfare, of which the most recent had been signed at Geneva on July 27, 1929.

- (2) The prohibition of dropping bombs of any kind whatsoever on open localities outside the range of the medium heavy artillery of the fighting fronts.
- (3) The prohibition of the bombardment with long-range guns of towns distant more than 20 km. from the battle zone.
- (4) The abolition and prohibition of the construction of tanks of the heaviest type.
- (5) The abolition and prohibition of artillery of the heaviest calibre.

27. As soon as possibilities for further limitation of armaments emerge from such discussions and agreements, they should be utilised.

28. The German Government hereby declare themselves now prepared to accede to every such settlement, in so far as it is valid internationally.

29. The German Government believe that even if only a first step is taken on the road to disarmament, this will have an enormous effect on the relationship between the nations, and thus on the return of that confidence which is the prior condition for the development of trade and prosperity.

30. In accordance with the general desire for the restoration of favourable economic conditions, the German Government are therefore prepared, immediately after the conclusion of the political treaties, to enter into an exchange of views on economic problems with the other countries concerned, in the spirit of the proposals made, and to contribute all that lies in their power to improve the economic situation in Europe and the world economic situation which is inseparable therefrom.

31. The German Government believe that with the peace plan set forth above they have made their contribution to the reconstruction of a new Europe on the basis of mutual respect and confidence between sovereign States. Many opportunities for such a pacification of Europe, which Germany has so frequently offered in the last few years, have been neglected. May this attempt to achieve European understanding at last succeed.

32. The German Government confidently believe that they have now cleared the way in this direction by submitting the above peace plan.

### No. 243

4602/E190332

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 1, 1936.

Ambassador Attolico, who had meanwhile received a provisional French translation of the German Peace Plan of March 31, telephoned me at midday today and enquired in great agitation as to the



meaning of the introduction to Point 16:<sup>1</sup> Germany expresses her willingness to re-enter the League of Nations either *at once* or after the conclusion of the agreements. He pointed out the special significance which Germany's return to the League of Nations would have for his own Government. Should this formula perhaps be understood to mean that Germany would return to Geneva even tomorrow, if she were invited to do so?

I told the Ambassador that as I had not collaborated over this formula, I could not give him an authentic interpretation, but I was in no doubt at all that our willingness to return to the League of Nations would not fall within the first period of the four months. Moreover, he should not overlook the fact that the willingness to return to the League of Nations had already been expressed on March 7, at the end of our programme.<sup>2</sup> This explanation appeared to satisfy him, and he gave me his own interpretation, which he proposes to give to his Government, which I did not fully understand, but which, I gathered, was to the effect that we were in no hurry to return to Geneva, but that we wished to avoid giving the appearance of our return being dependent on all sorts of unmentioned preconditions.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> No copy of the provisional French translation has been found; the reference is to point 18 in paragraph 22 of document No. 242, which had been point 16 in the draft (3242/712527-43) cited in footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

## No. 244

63/44045-46

### *The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

LONDON, April 1, 1936.

For the Führer and the Foreign Minister.

Together with Dieckhoff, I called on Eden this morning and communicated our document<sup>2</sup> to him in the presence of Lord Halifax and Mr. Wigram. Before I read it out to Eden, I pointed out that the German Government, in accordance with the mandate given them by the entire

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<sup>1</sup> This document has no heading or signature; a draft in the files of the German Delegation in London (7962/E574905-06) is marked "signed R[ibbentrop]" in an unidentified handwriting, and has been prepared as a telegram. There is, however, no indication of such a telegram in the Foreign Ministry's register of incoming telegrams and it would, therefore, appear that the text was transmitted by telephone.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 242.

German people on March 29,<sup>3</sup> were now placing before the world their great constructive peace plan. Germany hoped that the magnanimity of this plan would now clear the way to negotiations and that the work of peace so eagerly desired by the peoples might soon be completed. Both Ministers seemed impressed by the plan, although Eden reserved all comment for the moment on so comprehensive a document.

I then expounded some of the points of our peace plan in the manner previously discussed. Eden returned to the question of possible non-construction of fortifications on our western frontier during the interim period; this, however, I rejected, with the familiar arguments, so that this point was not insisted upon any further. Eden and Halifax both stressed that they were still, as before, seeking ways and means of bridging the gulf with France and of bringing her to the conference table.

I said that Germany could not understand this, for France either desired the consolidation of Europe or she did not. There could be no question of a threat to France; if anything, the reverse was the case, and, moreover, the peaceful intentions of both sides would in future be guaranteed by the proposed Commission. The necessity for any further interim measures would thus disappear, and it must surely be clear to the whole world that, in any definitive negotiations, the possibility of even discussing questions of German sovereignty would from the start be out of the question for Germany. In my opinion it must now be possible for Britain, by reason of the magnanimous [German] plan, to get France to enter into the negotiations which, in fact, were desired by the overwhelming majority of the French people. Eden and Halifax seemed to be impressed by this reasoning, though still murmuring about there being difficulties. They said they would first have to discuss the document with the British Cabinet and would like to take the opportunity of seeing me again tomorrow or the day after. Finally I also enquired as to what it was thought the next stage should be and whether the British Government did not think it would be better for the negotiations to be held after the French elections had taken place. Eden replied that he would like to study the whole complex of questions first, and then to discuss further procedure with me tomorrow or the day after. With regard to the time of publication for the document, it was agreed that this should be in the Thursday morning newspapers.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> The elections for the Reichstag held on Mar. 29 showed a majority of nearly 99 per cent for the National Socialist Party List.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., on Apr. 2.

## No. 245

6710/E508586

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, April 1, 1936.

RM 306.

II R 941.

The Polish Ambassador called on me today and conveyed the greetings of the Polish Foreign Minister, Beck, who had passed through here a few days ago.<sup>1</sup> At the same time he told me on Beck's instructions that the latter's activity in London had been directed towards preventing, at the League of National Council, the verdict on our alleged breach of the Locarno Treaty from being worded insultingly and, furthermore, in conjunction with other members of the League Council, to resisting the attempts of the remaining Locarno Powers to bring pressure to bear on the League Council. With a number of other members of the Council, he had from the very beginning expressed himself as against the idea of sanctions.

M. Lipski then said that he was well satisfied with the progress of the discussions on the Corridor debt.<sup>2</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Beck passed through Berlin on his return from London to Warsaw on Mar. 29.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 261.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Herr Kamphoevener: Perhaps we might take this occasion also to inform the Embassy in Warsaw about what we have learnt from the Delegation and from secret sources. R[enthe]-F[ink], Apr. 1." The first paragraph of the document here printed was repeated to Warsaw in despatch zu II R 941 of Apr. 8 (6710/E508587-88), which also commented upon Beck's attitude in London, concluding that, despite the way the Polish vote had been cast, Beck had both in public and in private afforded Germany useful support.

## No. 246

6114/E454649

*Memorandum by an Official of Department II*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, April 1, 1936.

II Oe. 950.

Herr von Papen, before his departure today, informed me that at midday he had again been received by the Führer and Chancellor who had, for the time being, put off the suggested tripartite meeting of representatives of National Socialism, Fascism and the Heimwehr.<sup>1</sup> The Führer was obviously displeased at Mussolini's attitude in the present

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 90.

situation and, moreover, first wished to await the effects of the German offer of March 31.<sup>2</sup>

As to who should be sent to represent the Party at the proposed tripartite meeting, which may take place at a later date, Herr von Papen has proposed to the Führer and Chancellor that this should be the Reichsführer of the SS, Herr Himmler. This proposal has, as Herr von Papen tells us, fallen on fertile ground. He says that he has also won the support of Minister President Göring for Himmler as a possible candidate.

ALTENBURG

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 242.

[EDITORS' NOTE: According to a statement made on April 3, 1936, in the House of Commons by the British Foreign Secretary (see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 2309-2312), he had on the previous day handed to the Belgian and French Ambassadors in London the British Government's letters of guarantee in regard to the action to be taken if negotiations for a new settlement should fail (for which see the second annex to the Proposals of the Locarno Powers printed in the Editors' Note on p. 208) together with identical Notes stating that the delivery of this letter did not imply that the effort of conciliation had failed and expressing Britain's readiness to instruct her General Staff forthwith to enter into contact with the Belgian/French General Staff. For the text of these Notes and of the French and Belgian replies, all dated April 1, see British White Paper, Cmd. 5149 of 1936: *Correspondence with the Belgian and French Ambassadors relating to "Text of Proposals drawn up by the Representatives of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Italy. London, March 19, 1936, Cmd. 5134"*.]

## No. 247

6710/E508563-65

*Memorandum by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

LONDON, April 2, 1936.

D.Del. e.o. No. 8.

II R 932.

### APPRECIATION OF THE SITUATION

For Ambassador von Ribbentrop.

1. The Peace Plan<sup>1</sup> has, on the whole, made a good impression here; it was obvious—particularly as regards our proposals for the interim

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 242.



period—that so much had not been expected, and our proposals have therefore been received with relief. It would, naturally, have been welcomed had we conceded a little more, particularly on the question of fortifications, but this omission has not much affected the comparatively favourable impression made. We must however expect Eden to make a fresh attempt to extract a concession from us on the fortifications question. He is unlikely to be content with our having indicated that permanent fortifications cannot in any case be constructed during the [intervening] four months. I would draw your attention to today's leading article in *The Times* on this point.

2. Eden will further be putting to Herr von Ribbentrop today a series of questions which will presumably deal with points arising from the attached memorandum.<sup>2</sup> In this connection I would refer you to the clearly written article by Ewer<sup>3</sup> in today's *Daily Herald*.

3. That the General Staff talks are now to start is no longer surprising.<sup>4</sup> This was to be expected all-along, since the British Government had, after all, already given a firm promise, from which there was no departing. It seems certain, however, that technically the talks will be kept within very narrow limits and that care will be taken to see that, as far as possible, they do not digress into the political sphere. It is very interesting to observe that, according to almost all the newspapers, the Cabinet imposed these limitations during their meeting yesterday.

4. The announcement that the British Government's letter to the French and Belgian Governments, envisaged in the White Paper,<sup>5</sup> is now about to be despatched, is obviously attributable to the fact that it is desired to give the French a sugarplum [*den Franzosen einen Bonbon geben*] and avoid giving the impression that London is leaning over rather too far towards Germany's side. But it is remarkable how strongly almost all the newspapers stress that the despatch of the letter has no significance, since putting the promises contained in the letter into force is something that could only arise were the negotiations to fail completely. But, they are, since the British Government are determined not to let the negotiations fail if they can help it, and since Germany's *démarche* yesterday<sup>6</sup> makes this purpose easier, the danger of failure and, consequently, of the political action promised in the letter coming into play has grown less.

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 248.

<sup>3</sup> W. N. Ewer, Diplomatic Correspondent of the *Daily Herald*; the article has been filmed as 6710/E508566–67.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 367.

<sup>5</sup> In English in the original. The reference is to the British White Paper, Cmd. 5134 of 1936, which contained the text of proposals drawn up by the Representatives of Belgium, France, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Italy. (See also Editors' Note, p. 208.)

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 244.

5. I think that, by and large, we may be satisfied with the effect which the German Peace Plan has had on the atmosphere in Britain. In any case, it has made it much harder for the French to persist in their intransigent attitude. This does not, of course, mean that the French will not still make great difficulties before negotiations are finally started and that the British Government will not, in consequence, still exert strong pressure on us in order to extort a few further concessions. There is, however, no cause for Germany to make further concessions; the most dangerous period is over, and the ideas contained in the Peace Plan must first produce their effect on the British and French peoples. After Easter,<sup>7</sup> and at latest after the French elections, the situation will probably be more relaxed than it is today.

D[IECKHOFF]

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<sup>7</sup> Easter Sunday was on Apr. 12.

## No. 248

6710/E508568-73

### *Memorandum by a Member of the German Delegation in London*

LONDON, April 2, 1936.

D.Del. e.o. No. 9.

II R 933.

It is probable that questions on the German Peace Plan<sup>1</sup> will be asked, *inter alia*, on the following points:

### I

#### *On the 19 Points of the Peace Plan.*

##### *Re Point 2:*

Certain doubts appear to exist as to the significance of the four-month period. These doubts may well arise from the fact that Point 2 of the German [plan] says that these four months are to be the "first" period. In fact there can be no doubt that within this period of four months the negotiations on the questions of Western security must, according to the German plan, be concluded.

##### *Re Point 3:*

It is possible that further questions will be asked here with regard to the exact total and composition of the German troops and

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 242. The references below to various points are to the 19 points contained in paragraph 22 of the German plan.

possibly also concerning the date to which the German assurance relates.

The main point, however, will undoubtedly be the attempt to obtain some definite undertaking, in writing, on the fortifications question.

*Re Points 5-8:*

On these points questions may be asked about the exact terms of reference of the Commission and the precise content of the obligations to be accepted by the Governments.

It would probably be best to reply that the German Government are prepared to draw up a more detailed proposal.

*Re Point 10:*

In view of yesterday's debate in the House of Commons<sup>2</sup> and of this morning's press, it must be assumed that there will be questions on this point in particular.

It is being pointed out, both in the Commons and in the press, that a general obligation to refrain from aggression for an unlimited period of time is already contained in the Kellogg Pact.<sup>3</sup> Special obligations to refrain from aggression *vis-à-vis* France and Belgium, and that with a specified time limit, are not therefore regarded as being of any great value.

To this the reply could be made that the Kellogg Pact contains only a very general obligation and that the intention here is to define this obligation for the special situation obtaining between the five Powers, in a manner similar to, though not necessarily in the same form as, that of the Locarno Treaty. After the conclusion of the Kellogg Pact, a large number of non-aggression pacts were also concluded by other Powers and, in particular, by the Soviet Union. The twenty-five years' time limit means, in the first place, that the adaptation of the obligations to the particular situation obtaining between the Powers concerned can, *per se*, only accord with the concrete circumstances currently prevailing. The time limit would be all the more necessary if the treaty were also to contain obligations to render assistance. In any case, the Locarno Treaty was not concluded for all time either.

This point may also cause the question to be put whether Germany, upon the conclusion of such a pact, would also recognize the Franco-Soviet Pact. To this the reply could be that the Franco-Soviet Pact would have to be taken into consideration as an existing fact, and that in any case one of the objects of the negotiations would be to clarify the relationship between the two pacts.

<sup>2</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1970-1971.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the General Treaty for the Renunciation of War as an Instrument of National Policy, signed at Paris, Aug. 27, 1928; for text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xciv, pp. 57-64.

*Re Point 13:*

On this point it would be of interest to put a German counter-question as to what was now Britain's position on the Air Pact<sup>4</sup> and, especially, whether she would now be prepared for one to be concluded between all five Powers.

*Re Point 15:*

It may be asked why Germany is offering a treaty on "moral disarmament" to France only, and not, for instance, to Belgium.

Readiness to do so *vis-à-vis* Belgium also could presumably be affirmed.

*Re Point 16:*

On this point some doubt may exist as to whether the proposed plebiscite in Germany and in France is to apply only to Point 15 ("moral disarmament") or to the Western Pact as a whole. The former is presumably [*wohl*] intended.

*Re Point 18:*

The following questions may arise on this point: It has been stated, both in the House of Commons and, for example, in a recent lecture by Professor Toynbee in Berlin<sup>5</sup> that Germany could only receive those colonial territories which have so far been under British sovereignty if she were to enter into special obligations concerning the treatment of the natives. Germany could not, of course, declare herself willing to enter into any obligations imposed on her alone, but would, be prepared for negotiations on an agreement which should be binding on all colonial Powers alike.

What does Germany mean by the separation of the Covenant of the League of Nations from the Treaty of Versailles? Firstly, the separation of the text of the Covenant of the League of Nations from the Treaty of Versailles. It is, for example, absurd that all British decrees concerning sanctions against Italy should be styled "Treaty of Versailles Act".<sup>6</sup> Moreover, under the Treaty of Versailles, special functions relating to the execution of the Treaty are delegated to the League of Nations in only a few points now. This matter should, at an appropriate time, be the subject of negotiation.

*Re Point 19:*

With regard to the German proposal on arbitration, a question likely to be asked is whether such arbitration is to apply to all the

<sup>4</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, *passim*, and the present volume, document No. 8.

<sup>5</sup> On Feb. 28, to the Academy of German Law. For a summary of this lecture see *The Times* of Feb. 29, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> In English in the original.



19 German Points or only to certain of them, and in particular whether it is to apply also to the observance of obligations relating to the interim period (e.g. no reinforcement of troops and adherence to the assurance under No. VIII).<sup>7</sup> The best reply would probably be that the German proposal merely contains a general recognition of the principle of arbitration, but that the question would require careful study, and negotiations, in connection with each of the other 18 Points.

Another question which may be asked is whether Germany no longer recognizes the Hague Court of Justice and wishes a large new arbitration tribunal to be set up in its place. The English translation of Point 19 has: "Constitution of an international Court of Arbitration."<sup>8</sup> This translation might easily give rise to misunderstandings. There is no thought of setting aside the Hague Court and of replacing it by a large new Court of Arbitration. In order that the general assurance on settling disputes by arbitration may be brought into effect, each individual case should, rather, be studied to see whether the existing arbitration tribunals are appropriate and adequate, or whether new forms of procedure should be agreed upon. It would be best to reserve a precisely formulated reply on this Point.

## II

### *Re Paragraphs 25 and 26 of the English text:*<sup>9</sup>

It might perhaps be pointed out that there already exists the Geneva Gas Warfare Protocol of 1925.<sup>10</sup> The incompleteness of this Protocol has, however, been expressly recognized, e.g. during the Geneva disarmament negotiations. The draft drawn up during these negotiations<sup>11</sup> might well serve as a basis for the forthcoming negotiations.

Why is it that the German proposal does not provide, as did the Geneva protocol and the disarmament negotiations, for the prohibition of bacteriological warfare? We are naturally prepared to accept this also.

<sup>7</sup> Presumably a reference to Point 8 of the German Peace Plan (document No. 242).

<sup>8</sup> The words in quotation marks are in English in the original. In the fair copy in German of the German Memorandum of Mar. 31 cited in footnote 1 to document No. 242, Point 19 reads: "*Deutschland schlägt vor, ein internationales Schiedsgericht zu bilden, das für die Einhaltung dieses Vertragswerkes zuständig sein soll und dessen Entscheidungen für alle bindend sind.*"

<sup>9</sup> i.e., paragraphs 25 and 26 of document No. 242, which were renumbered 26 and 27 in the text printed in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5175 of 1936.

<sup>10</sup> The Protocol for the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare, of June 17, 1925; for the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, August, 1925, pp. 1159-1163.

<sup>11</sup> For a "Co-ordinating Table of the Draft Convention [prepared by the Preparatory Commission] and of the Propositions referred to the General Commission", see League of Nations: *Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, Conference Documents*, vol. 1, pp. 148-175.

## III

*General Questions:*

The *Daily Herald* raises the following further questions:<sup>12</sup>

(1) What is the relation of the German proposals to the obligations imposed by the Covenant of the League of Nations? To this it could be replied that Germany has already declared her willingness to join the League at once, and that therefore the new agreements would have to accord with the Covenant of the League of Nations.

(2) The Memorandum makes frequent mention of Europe. Does Germany mean this to include Soviet Russia as well? Here reference could be made to the Führer's speech of March 7,<sup>13</sup> according to which normal relations with the Soviet Union are to be maintained.

WOERMANN

<sup>12</sup> In its article of Apr. 2, cited in document No. 247, footnote 3.

<sup>13</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

## No. 249

769/270910-14

*Circular of the High Command of the Army*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

April 2, 1936.

*Generalstab des Heeres*

Az. 3 a/n 31, 3.Abt.II

*Review of the concentration of French covering troops,  
March 7-31, 1936.*

(To serve also as annex to the situation map of April 2, 1936.)<sup>2</sup>

The French Army High Command's measures were carried out in two phases:

*Phase 1*

*March 7:* On the afternoon of March 7 orders were issued for the Military Districts II, VI, XX and VII<sup>3</sup> to put the "modified frontier cover" into operation together with stage 3 of the "security measures" and at the same time, for the whole country, at least stage 1 of the "security measures".

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Foreign Ministry, the Commanders in Chief of the Navy and the Luftwaffe, and the various military authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (M207/M006606-14).

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Military Districts with headquarters at Amiens, Metz, Nancy and Besançon respectively.

The execution of these orders began in the late evening of March 7, zero hour apparently being 10 p.m.

Thereupon all active *fortress troops* (infantry, artillery), some stationed far in the rear, were immediately moved up into the *fortifications*, and the line of fortifications from Basle to the Belgian frontier was placed on a war-time defensive footing.

The effects of these, in part very drastic, security measures, became apparent as early as March 8, often showing signs of undue haste: The construction of pontoon bridges, preparations for evacuation in the frontier areas, requisitioning of motor vehicles and accessories, checks on the railway trains, motorized patrols within a 30-km. zone along the frontier, erection of road blocks.

In addition to these movements, the transport of troops of the 2nd North African Division to the Saar prohibited zone [*Sperrgebiet*] also began.

*March 8:* Under an ordinance issued by the Council of Ministers on the morning of March 8, the Minister of War ordered far-reaching measures. This was the beginning of

### *Phase 2*

of the movements: Now *all* divisions of the Military Frontier Districts VI, VII and XX were moved up to cover the frontier. This *at first* affected:

The 2nd North African Division

The 11th Division

The 42nd Division with the 507th motorized Regiment

The 14th Division

The 43rd Division

The 2nd Cavalry Division

The 510th Tank Regiment, the 51st heavy Tank Battalion.

The assembly of these divisions by rail and lorry was carried out between the evening of March 8 and midday on March 10. It was, however, apparently carried out on a *peace-time footing*.

*March 12:* On March 12 and 13 the Light Mechanized Division and the 12th and 13th Divisions moved towards the East, and 4-5 more Tank Regiments were moved up to the German frontier.

In addition further white and coloured troops were brought up from the Military Districts on the south-east frontier, apparently from as early as March 9 onwards, *but no precise information is as yet available as to their strength and disposition*. The troops concerned are:

Parts of the 29th Division

Parts of the 1st North African Division

Parts of the 1st Senegalese Division(?)

as well as parts of the 3rd and 5th Cavalry Divisions and further

armoured units, all of which, however, it has been possible to identify in the frontier security zone.

It appears that this is only a matter of bringing up numerous smallish units (battalions, etc.), which are intended to reinforce the Frontier Military Districts. Whether they have merely been attached to the formations of the Frontier Military Districts or whether they have been formed into independent "operational units", as in the spring of 1935, is not clear.

Large quantities of material have been transferred from central to south-west France. Unconfirmed reports indicate that the fuel-oil storage tanks in central France have been filled.

*March 14:* By March 14 these movements appeared by and large to have been completed.

*March 17:* On March 17 withdrawals of individual units from the fortified zone to the frontier garrison towns were observed at many points. It became clear that the French were preparing for the period of tension to last a long time and therefore wished to spare the population and the troops. The 12th and 1st Mechanized Divisions returned to their peace-time garrisons, but in view of the fact that these formations are motorized, this does not represent any lessening of tension. In an emergency these formations could be back on the frontier within a few hours.

At the same time *transports of coloured troops* to the north-eastern frontier began, partly from Southern France but mostly from North Africa, and these were still going on at the end of March. Altogether about 5,000 to 10,000 men are involved, of whom *only a part* are arriving in complete units of, at the most, battalion strength. It appears that these coloured troops are primarily used to increase the numbers of the active covering divisions.

A further measure to increase the numerical strength of the frontier troops was the call-up of reservists in large numbers from the middle of March onwards, including apparently also younger men from the "*Disponibilité*". By bringing forward the reservists' manœuvres, which are scheduled to take place throughout the year, reinforcements amounting to some 50,000 men could be obtained.

### *The Air Force*

The *Air Force units*—at least in the whole of Eastern and Northern France—are in a state of alert.

### *Air Defence*

It is to be assumed that, throughout the frontier area bordering on Germany and south of Belfort, and apparently also around Paris and other larger towns of the North-East, all active anti-aircraft units



are in position and in a state of alert, and have been reinforced by specialists from the *Disponibilité*. In addition there are constant patrol flights over the frontier territory, on watch for any frontier violations by German aircraft.

*To sum up, there appear to be 200,000–250,000 men, in a high state of readiness, assembled along the German frontier.*

By order:  
STÜLPNAGEL

## No. 250

6710/E508562

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 189 of April 2

PARIS, April 3, 1936—[9:30 a.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received April 3—10:35 a.m.

II R 928.

One of the main arguments which is being generally used in the Paris press (which is almost unanimous in sharply rejecting the new German proposals),<sup>2</sup> is the assertion that the positive proposals for the pacification of Europe do not inspire confidence, because their sole object is the creation of a "*pax germanica*", in other words the reorganization of Europe in accordance with German wishes, German interests and German methods. As proof of this the press is trying to adduce certain quotations from the German press.

At present it seems to me by no means certain that the people are rejecting the positive part of the German proposals with the same unanimity as the press. To make it easier for the more objectively thinking portion of the population to formulate its views, it would be desirable for the German press, when commenting on the proposals, not to give prominence to the idea that Germany wishes to bring about the reorganization of Europe in the light of new ideas, but rather for it to expound Germany's intention to make use of the knowledge gained from long years of bitter experience in international politics, in order to eliminate wild and fruitless ideas from the welter of previous political principles and demands and to place the emphasis on practical work.

FORSTER

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris Embassy draft (6403/E475029).

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the German Peace Plan of Mar. 31; see document No. 242.

## No. 251

6710/E508725-31

*The Head of the German Delegation in London to the Foreign Ministry*  
Telegram<sup>1</sup>

LONDON, April 3, 1936.  
zu II R 978.<sup>2</sup>

For the Führer and Chancellor and the Foreign Minister.

I have not until today had an opportunity of reporting on yesterday's long conversation with Eden.

1. *Concerning the impression made by, and further action to be taken on, the German Peace Plan.*<sup>3</sup>

Eden revealed to me that the British Cabinet regarded the Führer's Peace Plan as a valuable contribution to the clarification of the political situation; they had noted with regret that it makes no further contribution with regard to the interim period and in particular contains no agreement not to fortify the Rhineland. Nevertheless, the British Cabinet would now do their utmost to set negotiations in train. Eden read out to me the main points of the statement which he made today in the House of Commons,<sup>4</sup> and which can, on the whole, be described as distinctly positive. It originally contained a passage expressing Great Britain's regret that the German Peace Plan did not contain [a statement of] readiness not to fortify the Rhineland during the interim period. I asked Eden to omit this passage, since this point was completely indiscussible for us. Eden has complied with this request, confining himself today merely to a general expression of regret at the lack of any further contribution. My observations were approximately as follows:

Last week, as a result of the Locarno document<sup>5</sup> and the proposed General Staff talks, the situation and mood in Germany had been anything but rosy. After receiving his general mandate from the German people on March 29,<sup>6</sup> the Führer had finally decided once again to submit a definitive peace plan to the world. The important thing now was that this plan should be taken in the right spirit. Where the question of fortifications was concerned I was no longer in a position to submit any proposal to my Government. This question was indiscussible.

<sup>1</sup> Typed marginal note: "Delivered by Herr Min[isterial] Dir[ektor] Dieckhoff on Apr. 4, 1936, 8:30 p.m."

<sup>2</sup> II R 978 was the number given to the Foreign Ministry circular cited in footnote 12 below.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242.

<sup>4</sup> For the text of Eden's statement of Apr. 3 see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 2303-2306.

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 244, footnote 3.

I was fully acquainted with the Führer's attitude, and if such an unreasonable suggestion were once more made to him, the whole Peace Plan might be seriously endangered. Eden then dropped this point and admitted that they now appreciated the situation. Furthermore, I told Eden, the peaceful intentions of both sides would surely be guaranteed by the Arbitration Commission proposed by us for the interim period, so that further discussion on possible measures during the interim period was in any case superfluous. I then went on to say that in my opinion the question of concessions in no way reached the crux of the matter, but that the difficulty lay in the intransigence at present displayed by certain French Government circles, although the overwhelming majority of the French people, and many leading Frenchmen too, were entirely reasonable. In this connection, I said, yesterday's somewhat hysterical morning press in Paris, which had transformed the German Peace Plan into a war plan, was of interest. It was therefore important that the atmosphere should be quietened until after the French elections, since it was my firm belief that by that time [the views of] a sufficient number of reasonable Frenchmen would have prevailed in Paris. Eden told me that he shared my views with regard to the French mentality and the necessity of postponing negotiations until after the French elections.

## *2. Concerning the General Staff talks.*

Eden revealed to me that the General Staff talks with the French and the Belgians were to start at once. He had managed to obtain that London should be the venue for the negotiations, which was very important. The negotiations would be strictly confined to the clearly defensive case of an invasion of Belgium or France by Germany. Upon my asking a number of questions concerning details, Eden replied that it was merely a matter of an exchange of information as to what troops, etc. Britain could make available to Belgium and France in such a case. This, he said, was in all conscience but little. There was no question of any mobilization plans or of exchanging officers, Military Missions, or even troops, etc. Nor would Britain in any circumstances raise any fresh bodies of troops or contemplate doing so by reason of this obligation to render aid.

I then once again expounded to Eden Germany's grave and fundamental views concerning such one-sided General Staff talks, since

(1) Germany could not, in principle, see why, things being as they were, Britain should have to fulfil her assistance obligations by engaging in General Staff talks of this kind;

(2) Militarily speaking, the situation on the Rhine did not give the slightest cause for such talks, but, on the contrary,

(3) Such one-sided talks would prejudice the impending general negotiations and, by strengthening those forces in France which did not

desire consolidation, they might well put the whole peace plan in jeopardy. Germany was of the opinion that General Staff talks should only take place—and even then only on a limited scale—after the completion of the new political treaty structure in the West, and that then they should be on a strictly reciprocal basis.

Eden replied that, in order to get the French to the conference table, it was necessary to offer them some psychological inducement. This Britain hoped to achieve by agreeing to General Staff talks, since we ourselves could give no help for the interim period.

I then told Eden the following: If it had already been decided to hold these regrettable General Staff talks, then, in my opinion, there were two points to be remembered as being exceptionally important:

(1) That such talks must be strictly limited, since otherwise subsequent reciprocal General Staff talks between the Western Powers would not be possible at all, and

(2) That Britain, before finally agreeing to the General Staff talks, should make it a clear condition to France that immediately after the French elections she should sit down at the conference table with the former Locarno Powers in order then to construct the new peace.

I put it to Eden that, in my view, there was no better way in which Britain could fulfil her obligation to render aid under the Locarno Pact than by compelling France, after security had been achieved during the interim period by means of the General Staff talks, to grasp the chance fortune offered her, in other words promptly to complete the great treaty structure in the West proposed by the Führer. Anyone in France who failed to appreciate this could not desire any consolidation. In my view this pre-condition for the General Staff talks was of decisive importance, and I hoped that Britain, who surely desired consolidation as much as we did, would have some serious words to say on this subject.

At first Eden was very reserved in his comments and once again produced his arguments that they were, after all, guarantors of Locarno and therefore not free, etc. As, however, this point, in my opinion, is extremely important and might perhaps even be regarded as decisive for the further development of the matter, I insisted very strongly, which appeared to make an impression on Eden. He finally asked me to leave to him the manner in which they should proceed here, but said that he could definitely assure me that he would exert strong pressure. I believe that, if only in Britain's own interest, Eden will proceed along these lines.

Concerning subsequent General Staff talks after the completion of the treaty structure, Eden repeated his promise that these talks could of course also be taken up immediately between the German and the British General Staffs. That such talks, if held between various Powers together and against one another, could basically only be of a very limited nature is plain.



In conclusion, Eden asked me to agree that he might state in Parliament that he had explained the nature of these General Staff talks to me. I requested him to refrain from doing so, as this might give British public opinion the impression that Germany had reconciled herself to them.

### 3. *Concerning final negotiations.*

I asked Eden whether he thought we would have concluded the negotiations by the end of July, if they were begun immediately after the French elections. Eden thought that, once we were sitting round the conference table, two months would probably be sufficient safely to complete these treaties. I took this opportunity straightaway to tell Eden the following:

For Germany it was a self-evident pre-condition of her participation in such negotiations that the whole question of German sovereignty could no longer be discussed in any way. Otherwise I should not be able to take my place at the conference table at all, or if I did, then the negotiations would probably break down within half an hour. Eden replied in clear terms that that was correctly understood here.

I think it important that, once the atmosphere has become a little calmer, we should go on making this clear both in the press and in conversations, for, according to my information, France will undoubtedly continue to work for some sort of limitation of sovereignty in the Rhineland.

### 4. *Concerning the Letter to Belgium and France.*

Eden told me that the letter to Belgium and France<sup>7</sup> would now be despatched, but that it would be made quite clear that this did not mean that this letter would come into force in any way already at this stage.

Of interest in this connection is a question asked by Lloyd George in the House of Commons yesterday,<sup>8</sup> which ran as follows:

"With regard to the military discussions, can the Foreign Secretary assure the House and the country that it is not contemplated to put any of these military plans into operation, in the unfortunate event of a failure of these negotiations, unless there is an unprovoked attack by the German forces upon Belgian or French soil, that is, an actual invasion of [either] France or Belgium [?]" To this Eden replied in the affirmative.<sup>8</sup>

This constitutes a not unimportant reservation to the undertaking contained in Britain's letter to France, to which Lloyd George drew my attention in conversation today, namely that, even if negotiations

<sup>7</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 367.

<sup>8</sup> On Apr. 3; see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, col. 2307.

should break down, Britain will only give France military support in the event of an actual invasion of France or Belgium.

### 5. *Concerning the Air Pact.*

Eden told me that Britain was in favour of this Air Pact. When I asked how the British Government envisaged such an air pact, Eden was unable to give me any more precise information.

This is more or less the substance of my yesterday's conversation with Eden.

Fundamentally, Eden's declaration in the House of Commons is to be regarded as distinctly positive. We shall, of course, first have to wait and see whether Eden is the man now to meet French pressure with the requisite counter-pressure. In order to strengthen Eden's hand as far as possible, I have decided to remain here a few days longer, and in the course of the next few days I propose to see a considerable number of the members of the British Cabinet and point out to them that Britain, in return for agreeing to General Staff talks, [should] now put very clear-cut conditions to France. I have already taken a few steps in this direction this afternoon when I saw Lloyd George, the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Monsell (this conversation can be described as definitely positive, as Monsell told me that the General Staff talks would be most rigidly limited and supervised), the Minister of Transport, Oliver Stanley, Lord Londonderry, Lord Lothian, etc.

Tomorrow I am going into the country to see Vansittart, and during the next few days I shall also see Baldwin, MacDonald, Neville Chamberlain, Halifax and a few more.

*P.S.*—Before Eden made his statement in the House of Commons,<sup>9</sup> I called on him again briefly this morning and told him that I had in the meanwhile telephoned to my Government and reported to them that the decision to hold General Staff talks had now been taken.<sup>10</sup> My Government's views agreed one hundred per cent with what I had told Eden yesterday, and I once again stressed that, in principle, my Government regretted these talks as such, and again referred to the importance of the present psychological moment, which must not be let slip, namely, by agreeing to hold these talks to get the French to the conference table immediately after the elections.

In general, it should be added that public opinion here continues to be favourably inclined, but that those circles of the British Cabinet and of the House of Commons which were previously hostile to Germany are about to embark on a systematic anti-German campaign throughout the country with the object of making public opinion more receptive to the Government's policy. We shall have to keep a close watch on this

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 4 above.

<sup>10</sup> No record of this telephone conversation has been found.

and reply with appropriate counter-measures. We shall start doing something about this here during the next few days.

*Concerning Reuter*

All Reuter reports on my conversation with Eden yesterday are pure inventions and the same applies to the report in *The Times*,<sup>11</sup> according to which we are alleged to have proposed that the General Staff talks should be postponed in return for concessions in the fortifications question. All this is a further indication of the campaign which certain Government quarters here have undertaken.<sup>12</sup>

RIBBENTROP

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<sup>11</sup> Of Apr. 3, 1936.

<sup>12</sup> German Missions were informed that Ribbentrop had had talks with Eden on Apr. 1, 2 and 3, and of the contents of the document here printed, in Circular e.o. II R 978 of Apr. 7 (6710/E508715-22). With respect to the proposed Staff talks the circular commented that British reserve was also dictated by purely military considerations, because "the precautionary measures which Britain has taken in the Mediterranean and in Egypt in view of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict make her unable at present to offer the French and the Belgians much more on the continent than theoretical General Staff talks".

No. 252

63/44061-62

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, April 3, 1936.

RM 310.

The Italian Ambassador called on me this morning and, as he said, on instructions from Mussolini handed me the attached statement on Mussolini's attitude to our proposals. I expressed our thanks to the Ambassador and assured him that I would inform the Führer of this communication as quickly as possible.

The Ambassador then turned to certain information which had reached him from Rome, according to which "a highly-placed personage in Berlin" had recently told a Central European diplomat that the *Anschluss* question had merely been temporarily shelved for reasons of expediency and that it would certainly be raised again at the appropriate moment. Signor Attolico was unwilling to give me the name of the highly-placed personage. I referred the Ambassador to the repeated statements made on this subject by the Führer and added that, unless he could give me the source of his information, there was nothing I could do in the matter and that I must also doubt that the allegedly highly-placed personage had expressed himself in the sense attributed to him.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

[Enclosure]

ROME, April 2, 1936/XIV.  
zu RM. 310.

1. I have read, with the greatest interest, Hitler's proposal, to the constructive portions of which I attach exceptional significance.

2. I have noted with satisfaction the part which the document assigns to Italy, both during the preparatory phase and in the concluding stage.<sup>1</sup>

3. It is my conviction that any discussion should be postponed until after the French elections.

4. Italy will not take part in any possible General Staff talks and, should a conference of the Locarno Powers be called, Italy will not agree to any measures directed against Germany.

5. In the tripartite talks recently held in Rome,<sup>2</sup> the attitude I adopted was one of express recognition of Germany's position and interests in the Danubian region.

6. I request you to bring the above to the knowledge of the Führer at once, and to express to him my congratulations on the result of the recently held plebiscite.<sup>3</sup>

MUSSOLINI

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Bülow's handwriting: "=*Constructive!* (Attolico, Apr. 7)."

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 204 and 237.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 244, footnote 3.

## No. 253

5753/H040650-51

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 3, 1936.  
II It. 388.

The Hungarian Minister called on me today. He is going to Budapest for Easter and would like to inform his Government of what our attitude is towards the Conference of the Rome Pact [Powers].<sup>1</sup> I confirmed the statements made recently by Herr v. Renthe-Fink,<sup>2</sup> but added that the introduction of conscription by Austria,<sup>3</sup> which must surely have been discussed in Rome, had come as a complete surprise to us. We approved the Austrian action and would afford it moral support against the opposition that threatened, but we naturally

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., the conference between Italy, Austria and Hungary in Rome, Mar. 21-23, which had resulted in the signature of three Protocols additional to those signed on Mar. 17, 1934. See document No. 165 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 237.

<sup>3</sup> On Apr. 1, 1936, a bill was passed in the Austrian National Assembly introducing "compulsory service with or without arms" for all males between the ages of 18 and 42.



wondered whether further matters had been discussed in Rome of which we had no knowledge. Furthermore, I countered the somewhat over-optimistic statements of the Hungarian representatives to Herr von Hassell<sup>4</sup> and Herr von Mackensen<sup>5</sup> by explaining to the Minister that we were prepared for political and possibly also economic cooperation with the Rome Pact Powers, but that there could never be any question of the Reich formally joining the Rome Pact, which had at first also been directed against Germany.

We then discussed the reception accorded to the German Peace Plan.<sup>6</sup> The Minister was impressed by the approval accorded it by British and even by French public opinion, by contrast to the more critical attitude adopted by both Governments.

In conclusion, the Minister asked me, on Kánya's instructions, what was our attitude towards the South American Peace Pact,<sup>7</sup> which the Argentine Minister here had so enthusiastically advocated in Budapest.<sup>8</sup> I gave the Minister our views.

BÜLOW

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 204.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 237, footnote 3.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 242.

<sup>7</sup> After making preliminary enquiries in the summer of 1935, President Roosevelt wrote on Jan. 30, 1936, to the Presidents of all American Republics suggesting the summoning of an extraordinary inter-American conference, to assemble in Buenos Aires, to determine how the maintenance of peace among the American Republics might best be safeguarded. The Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace was eventually held in Buenos Aires Dec. 1-23, 1936. See *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1935, vol. iv, pp. 1-6, and 1936, vol. v, pp. 3-34.

<sup>8</sup> Eduardo Labougle, Argentine Minister in Germany and Hungary.

## No. 254

6680/H096419

*Marshal Chiang Kai-shek to War Minister Blomberg*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

via Colonel General v. Seeckt

April 3, 1936.

I have complete confidence in the plan proposed by Klein for economic cooperation between Germany and China.

It is simply a matter of false reports alleging deliveries to Canton.

Your telegram of March 24<sup>2</sup> and also detailed reports from Gu[sic: Ku] and the Commission<sup>3</sup> have proved that these reports are entirely unfounded and do not in any way correspond to the facts.

<sup>1</sup> This copy of the document here printed was sent to the Foreign Ministry under cover of document No. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 206.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 156, footnote 4.

I recognize the earnest desire of the German Government to co-operate with China. This has afforded me the greatest pleasure and relief.

I beg you to continue to negotiate, immediately if possible, with the Chinese Commission (with Gu [*sic*: Ku] and others), in order that a more rapid success may be obtained.

With friendly greetings,

CHIANG KAI-SHEK

## No. 255

6710/E508589

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 56 of April 4

ROME, April 4, 1936—1:40 p.m.

Received April 4—4:20 p.m.

II R 944.

Statements made by Mussolini to Reich Minister Frank<sup>1</sup> and utterances by other political personages made to me all agree that Italy will neither participate in the General Staff talks nor address to France and Belgium the letter envisaged in the White Paper.<sup>2</sup> Italy would, however, take part in any possible discussions between all the Locarno Powers, such as have been mooted for Brussels,<sup>3</sup> but with the familiar reserve and, as Mussolini put it, in order to sabotage them.

HASSELL

<sup>1</sup> Hans Frank, Reich Commissioner for Justice and President of the Academy of German Law, visited Rome on Apr. 4 to lecture to the Istituto Nazionale Fascista di Cultura. Documents on the antecedents of his visit and the refusal of the Pope to grant him an audience have been filmed on Serial M204. No record of his conversation with Mussolini or other Italian personages has been found. For his subsequent recollections of this visit, see Hans Frank: *Im Angesicht des Galgens* (München-Gräfelling, 1953), pp. 228-233.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the British White Paper, Cmd. 5134 of 1936, containing the proposals of the Locarno Powers with attached letter of guarantee (see Editors' Note, p. 208).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 257.

## No. 256

6710/E508596-97

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 29 of April 4

PRAGUE, April 4, 1936—3:40 p.m.

Received April 4—5:30 p.m.

II R 946.

I called on Beneš yesterday at his request. He informed me that he had received from Berlin affirmative replies to the questions put by

Mastný as to whether, in Germany's opinion, the proposed non-aggression pact could be reconciled with Czechoslovakia's existing alliances (France, Little Entente, Russia) and whether we regarded the German-Czech Locarno Arbitration Treaty<sup>1</sup> as still being valid. He then wished to learn what procedure we Germans envisaged if it should come to negotiations and, in particular, whether the negotiations with the Western Powers were to be conducted at a different time and place from the negotiations on non-aggression pacts with Germany's Eastern neighbours. He did not think that this would be advisable since peace represented an indivisible whole and separate negotiations would inevitably give rise to mistrust, which might even lead to the formation of new blocs. He said he was in general interested to know on what points Germany proposed to differentiate between the Eastern countries as compared with the West; whether, for instance, the Eastern treaties were also to have a twenty-five years' duration; whether it would be possible to organize moral disarmament in relations with Czechoslovakia too; whether Germany wished to conclude only bilateral non-aggression pacts in the East or whether she was prepared to safeguard peace in the East too by means of regional pacts?<sup>2</sup> He said he recognized that the position in the East differed from that in the West, and it was in no way his desire to extort from Germany anything that she did not wish to concede. Treaties were lasting only if they served the interests of all the signatories. If, however, the treaty with Czechoslovakia was to be different from the treaty with the Western Powers, then he would like to know precisely what were our reasons for the difference. He said he would be spending Easter in the country. He would like an answer after Easter, and would then like to continue the conversation with me.<sup>3</sup>

With regard to the Austrian Defence Law,<sup>4</sup> Beneš said that the Austrian Government had given as their reason the need for defence against Germany. He had let Austria know as early as the spring of last year, and again in the autumn, that he was not opposed to rearmament by way of negotiation, nor did he wish to pose unacceptable conditions; he was adopting the same attitude towards Hungary. He must, however, protest most strongly against Austria's unilateral

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 26, footnote 4. On the morning of Apr. 3, the German Foreign Ministry sent to the Czechoslovak Legation in Berlin a *note verbale* dated Mar. 31 (L987/L283887) agreeing to the prolongation of the terms of office of three of the members of the German-Czechoslovak Conciliation Commission. The draft of this *note verbale* bears the following marginal notes: (i) "N.B. The Foreign Minister has directed that the *note verbale* should be despatched! G[aus], Apr. 2." (ii) [In Gaus' handwriting] "N.B. By this *note verbale* we recognize the continued validity of the Arbitration Treaties concluded at Locarno with Czechoslovakia and Poland!!"

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting at this point: "No."

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting at this point: "No hurry."

<sup>4</sup> Of Apr. 1, reintroducing conscription in Austria; see document No. 253, footnote 3.

measures, and if Hungary were to follow this example it could lead to a conflict. A despatch follows.<sup>5</sup>

EISENLOHR<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 258.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "I would tell Eisenlohr for now that he will receive an answer at the appropriate time. v. N[eurath], Apr. 7". (2) "Has been submitted to the St[ate] S[ecretary] with the Foreign Minister's marginal notes. Respectfully [submitted] to Senior Counsellor von Renthe-Fink. E[tzdorf], Apr. 8." See also document No. 268.

## No. 257

6710/E508599-600

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter Telegram

No. 17 of April 4

BRUSSELS, [April 4, 1936].

II R 947.

During a conversation which I had with him today, Langenhove made some remarks about Belgium's attitude towards the German Peace Plan<sup>1</sup> and the negotiations at present in progress, from which it emerged that Belgium was adopting an attitude of reserve and was anxious to study the German Peace Plan at leisure and, incidentally, to promote agreement between the Great Powers, particularly Britain and France, in order to associate herself with the solution thus arrived at.

The following details are of interest in view of the current situation. Langenhove declared that the German step of March 7 and the German Peace Plan raised such great and revolutionary problems, that no snap decision could possibly be justified. It was to be hoped, however, that a thorough study of the proposals might yield a basis upon which to reorganize the political situation in Europe, particularly in Western Europe. Any precipitate statement of views might well gravely prejudice the solution of the points at issue. Van Langenhove allowed it to transpire that for these reasons the Belgian Government would have preferred consultations amongst the remaining Locarno Powers through diplomatic channels to the conference proposed by France. The Belgian Government have, however, not been able to bring themselves to reject the French proposal for a conference of the remaining Locarno Powers to be held in Brussels or Paris on April 8; on the contrary they have, as Langenhove said, replied that they would refrain from stating their own views on this point but would accept an agreement reached between the Great Powers. In this connection, Langenhove mentioned that there had been divergences of opinion in the discussions between London and Paris about Italy's participation in the proposed

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 242.



conference, but he believed that Italy would be invited to participate in a possible conference, and would probably take part.

In the course of the conversation I asked Langenhove how it was that, of the two British letters of April 1,<sup>2</sup> the Belgian Government had so far acknowledged only the covering letter, while they had not acknowledged the British Government's letter corresponding to the draft contained in the Memorandum of March 19,<sup>3</sup> as had been done immediately by the French Government. Langenhove stated that the text of the reply was being discussed within the Belgian Government, doubts and differences of opinion having arisen concerning the reciprocity of obligations (see Section 1(c) of the draft letter contained in the Memorandum of March 19) to be confirmed in this letter of reply, and that Belgium's attitude had not yet been determined. He added, in confidence and as his own personal opinion, that the Belgian Government would probably answer the [British] letter at the beginning of next week in terms similar to those of the French reply, but that the Belgian Government would, at the same time, inform the British Government orally of the limits within which, in view of their limited strength, the Belgian Government would have to confine themselves when fulfilling the obligations in question. The Belgian side would however make a formal reservation with regard to Belgian reciprocity in their reply to any communication which the Italian Government might, in accordance with the Memorandum of March 19, address to Belgium.

The text of the exchange of letters, which has been published here, follows by the same courier.<sup>4</sup>

BRÄUER

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 367.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> Under cover of report A 148 of Apr. 4 (6710/E508774-77).

## No. 258

6710/E508686-91

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A IV. 1 c 4 d

PRAGUE, April 4, 1936.

Received April 6.

II R 967.

Subject: Conversation with State President Beneš.

To today's telegraphic report<sup>1</sup> on the conversation I had yesterday evening with State President Beneš I should like to add the following amplifications and to state at the outset that the conversation was

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 256.

conducted in German, and that Beneš, who does not speak German well, did not always make himself very clear.

The State President began by referring with obvious satisfaction to the British Government's recent statement on their attitude toward Czechoslovakia. By this he clearly meant the answer which, according to press reports, Neville Chamberlain gave on March 26 to the question as to what attitude the British Government would adopt in the event of an unprovoked attack by Germany on Czechoslovakia or Poland.<sup>2</sup> Beneš let it transpire that he had been consulted in advance by the British Foreign Secretary, Eden, with whom he is on friendly terms.

Upon mention being made of the German-Czechoslovak Locarno Arbitration Treaty<sup>3</sup> and Germany still regarding it as valid, Beneš said that he was satisfied with this declaration by the German Government. If, therefore, Germany regarded herself as being still bound by this Arbitration Treaty, this meant that, "if nothing else occurs, if the situation remains the same", the Czechoslovak Government would consider themselves bound by this Treaty too.

By way of preface to his questions as to in what particular points and for what reasons the German Government proposed to formulate the non-aggression pacts offered to their eastern neighbours differently from the new twenty-five-year Western Pact, M. Beneš observed that, at the point in the Führer's proposals where the non-aggression pact offered to Czechoslovakia was mentioned, he had been struck by the words "in due course" [*"seinerzeit"*] and would like to know what these words really meant in this connection, and in particular whether it was to be deduced from this that we wished to negotiate with the Eastern countries at a different time and in a different place than with the Western countries? The text of the German Peace Plan was not to hand during this conversation. It was therefore not until after the conversation that I was able to confirm that Beneš had obviously confused the words "in due course" [*"seinerzeit"*] with the words "on her part" [*"seinerseits"*] used in Point 17 of the proposals,<sup>4</sup> where the sense must surely be quite clear. But what Beneš was really trying to explain was that, by separating the negotiations with the West from the negotiations with the East, suspicion might be aroused unnecessarily and fresh substance given to the widely held idea that Germany had something special in mind in the East, whereas peace should after all only be regarded as one and indivisible. When I remarked in reply that I would have thought that, if all subjects of negotiation were to be discussed at the same table, and if everyone were to take part at the same time, the negotiations would become very difficult and cumbersome

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<sup>2</sup> For the text of this statement, made in the House of Commons on Mar. 26, see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 1541-1543.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 26, footnote 4.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 242.

and that there were certain matters which did not concern the others, but which, e.g., encumbered German-Czech relations psychologically, such as, perhaps, the question of the German minority in Czechoslovakia, Beneš replied as follows: If separate negotiations were held, Czechoslovakia would have to keep in constant touch with the Governments of the Western Powers and with their allies. This would be very cumbersome and very time-consuming. But if all were assembled in the same place, everything would proceed much more easily and simply. During the negotiations on the Locarno Pact, he, as the then Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, had also been on the spot at the time, but he had, at that time, not attended any discussions which did not directly concern his country. He envisaged some similar method of procedure for the forthcoming negotiations too, should they take place. With regard to the German minority, he was at all times ready to discuss this question with us and he would like at some time to discuss this subject with me very exhaustively. It was quite true, he said, that this question encumbered German-Czechoslovak relations and might again jeopardize a *détente*. For this reason indeed it was necessary to speak frankly on this problem. Only it must be clearly understood that any such discussions or even negotiations could not be allowed to impinge on Czechoslovakia's sovereign rights. Moreover, he had always accepted intervention on the part of the League of Nations in the minorities question, and would always do so, and he was prepared to submit to international supervision over this question.

The attitude of the Czechoslovak Government in the present conflict, which had arisen as the result of our occupation of the Rhineland, was one of waiting on events. His Government would first have to see what those directly affected, i.e., the Western Powers, would do, but would, however, in no way attempt to exacerbate the situation. Once he had quite clearly understood what Germany had in mind regarding the form of the proposed pacts and the mode of procedure, and once he had thus been reassured over some remaining doubts, then he would be in a very much better position to exert a pacifying influence, particularly on France. With regard to the question, raised by M. Beneš, as to whether Germany intended to organize moral disarmament not only *vis-à-vis* France but also *vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia, he said that perhaps this question was not very important, since, once relations between Germany and Czechoslovakia had really improved, the frictions resulting, for example, from remarks in the press, would in his opinion gradually disappear of their own accord.

Beneš stated that he was not exactly optimistic as to the chances of negotiations really coming about; opposition to them in France was after all extremely strong. He could imagine that, apart from the possibility of armed conflict, which now hardly threatened any longer,



and the other possibility of negotiation on the German proposals, there existed yet a third possibility, i.e., that the atmosphere would become neither less troubled nor less tense, in fact that the oppressive sense of uncertainty would continue to hover over Europe. This would doubtless be an extremely unpleasant eventuality, but one that must be reckoned with.

It would seem, nevertheless, to transpire from the conversation that M. Beneš is beginning to get used to the idea of future negotiations and is closely concerning himself with the matter. Whilst the opinions expressed in the press here might appear to invite the conclusion that the Czechoslovak Government will try, adducing Germany's alleged lack of fidelity to treaties, to demand something other than the bilateral non-aggression pact offered, namely, either guarantees by third Powers on the pattern of the Western Pact, or a regional pact, it is apparent from Beneš' statements on this subject, which I reported by telegram,<sup>1</sup> that he would in certain circumstances be content with the bilateral pact offered him, provided that his anxieties about the difference in structure between the Eastern and Western treaties could be allayed. To remove these doubts would be all the more useful for us, in that Beneš is not only in touch with the British Government but is allegedly also in daily communication by telephone with those in charge at the Quai d'Orsay, and is thus in a position to exert, through these channels, an influence detrimental to a favourable development.

The weekly *Procházka*<sup>5</sup> article which appeared in the *Lidové Noviny* yesterday morning differs materially in tone and content from the comment appearing in other papers here and pursues much the same arguments as those which Beneš put forward to me. Particularly noteworthy is the positive attitude adopted towards the German proposals. I enclose an abridged translation of the article in question;<sup>6</sup> it is very probable that this article was inspired by M. Beneš.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>5</sup> Rudolf Procházka. This article was entitled: "The German Proposals".

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (6710/E508692-96).



## No. 259

5577/E400724-25

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander-in-Chief  
of the Navy, to the Foreign Ministry, and to Ambassador  
Ribbentrop (London)*

Mar. No. 359.

LONDON, April 6, 1936.

II M 1162 g.

Subject: Staff talks.

Because of a remark in today's press to the effect that the Navy especially would take part in the Staff talks, I called at the Admiralty today and had a talk with the Liaison Officer, the Admiral not being there.

The Liaison Officer told me that, if the talks took place, the Navy would certainly also participate, since all three Services would be included equally. As far as he knew, the Admiralty had not yet received instructions to make any particular preparations for these Staff talks; the scope and the lines of the talks, in so far as the Navy was concerned, were therefore not yet certain. This much, however, was clear, that the Navy, for other political reasons, was certainly in no position at the present time to make available any significant fighting force. Just as the Army, at present, had practically no forces available and the Air Force would probably have to fall back on Imperial Airways,<sup>1</sup> so the Admiralty too could at the moment only contribute a flotilla of old destroyers. He had heard that it was intended simply to leave the discussions to the Attachés; the possibility had also been discussed of entrusting the direction of these talks to Field Marshal Montgomery-Massingbord [*sic*],<sup>2</sup> who had relinquished his post as Commander in Chief of the Army today and would be available.

He could assure me that, at least up to the 4th of this month, his Chief, Admiral Troup<sup>3</sup> (Intelligence Division) had received no instructions.

As we parted, he promised that he would keep me informed and would also suggest that I should be kept informed by the Admiral himself.

WASSNER<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The British civil air-line.

<sup>2</sup> Field Marshal Sir Archibald Montgomery-Massingberd, Chief of the Imperial General Staff 1933-1936.

<sup>3</sup> Rear Admiral J. A. G. Troup, Director of Naval Intelligence in the Admiralty.

<sup>4</sup> A typewritten marginal note reads: "The Ambassador [Hoesch] is informed."

## No. 260

7435/E540114-16

*Circular of the State Secretary and Head of the Reich Chancellery*<sup>1</sup>

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, April 6, 1936.

Rk. 81 g.Rs.

The Führer and Chancellor, by his decree of April 4, 1936, has empowered the Prussian Minister President, Göring, to take the necessary measures to improve the raw materials and foreign exchange situation. I respectfully enclose a copy of the decree, which is to be treated as "*Top Secret*" and is not suitable to be passed on *verbatim*. By order of the Führer and Chancellor I request you to inform the Civil Service and Party authorities in an appropriate manner, in so far as they require to have knowledge of the decree. Where it is unavoidable for subordinate authorities to be informed in writing, I suggest the following version for this purpose:

"The improvement of the raw materials and foreign exchange situation is an essential condition for the continued performance of the State undertakings that have been put in hand. Since, to attain this object, numerous State and Party authorities must cooperate, the Führer and Chancellor, by his decree of April 4, 1936, has charged the Prussian Minister President, Göring, with the investigation and promulgation of all the requisite measures. The decree also empowers him for this purpose to question all State and Party authorities and give them instructions, and to be assisted therein and, if need be, represented, by the Reich War Minister, Colonel General von Blomberg<sup>2</sup> and Reich Minister Kerrl."<sup>3</sup>

This abridged version must also be marked "Secret" when passed on, and must be restricted to such Civil Service and Party authorities as are absolutely required to be informed.<sup>4</sup>

LAMMERS

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Führer's Deputy, Hess, the other Reich Ministers, the Prussian Finance Minister [Popitz] and the Führer and Chancellor's Commissioner for Economic Questions, Keppler.

<sup>2</sup> In a further communication, Rk. 81 g.Rs.II of Apr. 20, 1936 (7435/E540113), Lammers directed that "The last sentence of the Führer and Chancellor's decree of April 4, 1936, should read: 'In this he will be assisted and if need be represented by the Reich War Minister, the Plenipotentiary General for War Economy, and Reich Minister Kerrl'. You should, therefore, in the penultimate sentence of my communication under reference, delete the words 'Colonel General von Blomberg' and replace them with 'Reichsbank President Dr. Schacht.'" This emendation has been pencilled in on the original of the document here printed.

<sup>3</sup> Hanns Kerrl, Reich and Prussian Minister for Church Affairs.

<sup>4</sup> An official communiqué in the sense indicated in the second paragraph of the document here printed was issued on Apr. 27; for the text see *The Times* of Apr. 28, 1936.

[Enclosure]

THE FÜHRER AND CHANCELLOR  
TOP SECRET

BERLIN, April 4, 1936.  
Rk. 81 g.Rs.

At the instance of the Reich Minister of War and the Plenipotentiary-General for War Economy,<sup>5</sup> I issue the following order:

For the purpose of safeguarding the further restoration of military power [*Wehrhaftmachung*], an improvement in the raw materials and foreign exchange situation is necessary. Since, to attain this object, numerous State and Party authorities must cooperate, I hereby charge the Prussian Minister President, Göring, with the investigation and promulgation of all requisite measures. For this purpose he can question all State and Party authorities and give them instructions. In this he will be assisted and, if need be, represented, by the Reich War Minister [the Plenipotentiary General for War Economy],<sup>6</sup> and Reich Minister Kerrl.<sup>7</sup>

ADOLF HITLER

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<sup>5</sup> Hjalmar Schacht, President of the Reichsbank and Reich Minister of Economics, was appointed Plenipotentiary General for War Economy under the Reich Defence Law of May 21, 1935, for the text of which see *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxx, document No. 2261—PS, Exhibit U.S.A.—24, pp. 59–65. See also vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 178.

<sup>6</sup> In the original the words in square brackets have been pencilled in; see footnote 2 above.

<sup>7</sup> In memoranda of May 4 and 13 (6789/E513894–97) Neurath recorded Ministerial meetings at which Göring described the *modus procedendi* by which he proposed to apply the decree here printed.

## No. 261

5246/E311845

### *Memorandum by an Official of the Reich Chancellery*

BERLIN, April 6, 1936.  
[zu] Rk. 1251.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Corridor traffic.

At the instance of the Prussian Minister President, General Göring, conversations have taken place in the last few days on the one hand between Reichsbank President Schacht and the Polish Ambassador, Lipski, and on the other between Ambassador von Moltke<sup>2</sup> and the Polish Government. In consequence of these consultations, a small German delegation under the leadership of Ministerialdirektor Waldek, of the Reich Ministry of Transport, has left today for Warsaw in order

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<sup>1</sup> Rk. 1251 was the number given to a communication from the German Railways of Feb. 3 and to subsequent memoranda by Thomsen (5246/E311817–44).

<sup>2</sup> In a letter of Mar. 20 (9172/E645341) Moltke informed Senior Counsellor Roediger that Göring had asked him to come to Berlin to discuss the Corridor payments problem.

first to restore the links with the Polish Departments, which had been broken off.

The Foreign Ministry has no share in these negotiations or in bringing them about.

1. To the State Secretary [Lammers] for information.
2. Resubmit in a fortnight.

THOMSEN

## No. 262

6710/E509171

*The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry*

Kap. 160/173

CAPE TOWN, April 6, 1936.

Received April 17.

II R 1109.

Subject: South Africa and the German action in the Rhineland.

This morning's papers publish news from London in which it is described as significant that the Leader of the Opposition in the British House of Commons, Major Attlee, in a Parliamentary question to Foreign Secretary Eden, asked whether he did not think that the time had come to transfer discussion of the international situation brought about by Germany's action in the Rhineland from the narrow circle of the Locarno Powers to a wider forum and to bring it before the League of Nations. Eden agreed with this, particularly as, besides the Locarno Powers, a large number of other Powers were interested in the problems for discussion.<sup>1</sup> The press account added that this attitude of the British Government's had been determined to a considerable extent by the Dominions, in particular by Canada and South Africa, who, on the one hand, were not parties to the Locarno Treaty, and, on the other, had shown considerable interest in the present international crisis.

Secretary of State Bodenstein<sup>2</sup> told me today that this last assertion by the press was incorrect. The Union Government, he said, had certainly conveyed no intimation to the British Government that they regarded a transfer of the discussion from the circle of the Locarno Powers to the League of Nations as desirable at this juncture, or that they themselves wished to participate in the discussion. Since their first intervention at the height of the crisis through the well-known Herzog telegram (see my telegram Cape Town No. 10 of March 16),<sup>3</sup> the Union Government had indeed closely followed subsequent developments

<sup>1</sup> For this question and reply, of Apr. 3, see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 2306-2307.

<sup>2</sup> H. D. J. Bodenstein, South African Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 127.



and were being kept *au courant* all the time from London, but they had had no further cause for any material intervention since then. They had brought the telegram they had then sent to the British Government to the knowledge of the Governments of the other Dominions at the same time, with a view to suggesting to them that they, too, should express themselves in similar terms to the British Government. The other Dominion Governments, including Canada, had, however, replied that they saw no reason for so doing, as they were not signatories to the Locarno Treaty and were therefore not concerned in the European crisis (see your telegram No. 14 of March 21).<sup>4</sup>

On the strength of this fact, Bodenstein pointed out to me with a certain measure of satisfaction that the South African Government had therefore been the only one which had intervened in so strong and forthright a manner at the critical moment in order to restrain Britain from taking joint action with France against Germany. In consequence, no significance should be attached to newspaper reports about similar influence exerted by other Dominion Governments in London.

WIEHL

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 127, footnote 7.

## No. 263

5729/E415427-33

### *The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 62 of April 7

LONDON, April 7, 1936.

Received April 8—8:50 a.m.

III E 1240.

Yesterday's debate in the House of Commons on questions of domestic and foreign policy<sup>1</sup> was the outcome of a defeat suffered by the Government last week on a vote on a question relating to wages. The object of the debate was to afford the Government an opportunity of consolidating their position beyond any doubt by means of a vote of confidence. This, as the complete victory in the voting shows, was, as expected, formally achieved. The course of the debate, however, clearly showed how much credit the Government have lost since the autumn and how great is the extent of the accumulated displeasure and disappointment.

A detailed account of the debate follows in a despatch,<sup>2</sup> but I would venture to summarize some general impressions separately herewith, dividing these into the following four sections:

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<sup>1</sup> For the record of this debate see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, cols. 2441-2560.

<sup>2</sup> Report A 1502 of Apr. 7 (5729/E415417-23).

## (1) The position of the Government in general.

Baldwin's Cabinet, which, after their election victory,<sup>3</sup> began the new parliamentary session so triumphantly, have not recovered from the severe blow they sustained before Christmas from the acceptance and [subsequent] abandonment of the Hoare-Laval Plan, and are showing increasing symptoms of sickness. The dropping of Hoare and his replacement by Eden<sup>4</sup> did not bring the hoped-for relief, as Eden, as is shown in my reports at the time, could not and did not succeed in re-creating for British foreign policy the clear objectives and the undisputed position of leadership which it possessed before the fall of Hoare. Since, in the general view, Eden cannot be held responsible for this, the main weight of the general dissatisfaction tends increasingly to fall on the Prime Minister. It will be remembered that as early as February last Sir Austen Chamberlain delivered an extremely outspoken attack on Baldwin in the House of Commons,<sup>5</sup> to which the Prime Minister has never replied.

Apart from the difficulties in the field of foreign policy, there have meanwhile occurred certain domestic events, such as, for example, the widely deprecated appointment of Sir Thomas Inskip as Minister for [the Coordination of] Defence,<sup>6</sup> and the curious resignation of Lord Eustace Percy,<sup>7</sup> Minister without Portfolio, which constitute additional factors of uncertainty and dissatisfaction. It is increasingly thought that Baldwin is unable firmly and resolutely to lead his Government through the wilderness of present difficulties and along the path of a considered foreign and domestic policy, and it is increasingly rumoured that Baldwin's days are numbered and that sooner or later the Cabinet will have to be reconstructed.

It does not appear to be very likely, however, that the first of these eventualities will happen in the immediate future, and there undoubtedly still exist opportunities for the Government to regain their lost prestige. Nevertheless, it must be stated that the reputation and position of strength which the Government enjoyed when the parliamentary session began in the autumn, have diminished to a surprisingly large extent.

## (2) The Abyssinian problem.

Although domestic questions have played their part in the Government's loss of prestige, foreign policy has been a far more detrimental

<sup>3</sup> Elections resulting in a large, though reduced, National Government majority had taken place on Nov. 14, 1935.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 178, footnote 8.

<sup>5</sup> On Feb. 14: for the text of Sir Austen Chamberlain's speech see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 308, cols. 1360-66.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 178, footnote 9.

<sup>7</sup> Lord Eustace Percy resigned from the Government on Mar. 30, 1936. Press allegations that his resignation had been due to disagreements over foreign policy were contradicted in his letter of resignation (see *The Times* of Apr. 1, 1936).

factor, in particular the train of events in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict. Clear proof of this was furnished by the course of yesterday's debate on the vote of confidence, in which emphasis throughout was on foreign policy, and the main onslaughts were all connected with Abyssinia. Practically all the speakers regarded the Hoare-Laval plan as the root of all evil. It is symptomatic that no one dared to get up and declare that had this plan been pursued it might perhaps have secured for Abyssinia a peace more favourable than that with which the Negus now appears to be faced.

The victorious advance of the Italian troops in Abyssinia, the bombing of Abyssinian open towns which this involves, and the use of poison gas, fill public opinion and Parliament with shame that the League of Nations action, led by Britain, against the aggressor appears doomed to be ineffective and that the aggressor is apparently now approaching the moment when he will be able to dictate peace. The reputation of the League of Nations, the prestige of Britain, and confidence in the system of collectively safeguarding peace are all at stake. Indignation about Italy's barbarous methods of waging war is increasing the anger and shame felt at the Italian successes. The idea of readmitting Italy to the circle of those Great Powers called upon to secure peace is repugnant, but on the other hand the need for such a development, in view of the potential German menace, is appreciated. Opinion fluctuates between demanding, at long last, the imposition of the oil embargo,<sup>8</sup> though on the other hand this is acknowledged to be too late, and desiring the speedy cessation of hostilities, the outcome of which would, however, be bound to be a victorious peace for Italy and the final defeat of the principles of the League of Nations.

As a result of all this discontent, the Government, naturally, are blamed for the failure of a policy which was unsound both in conception and in execution.

### (3) The Rhineland problem.

Every member of the Commons knows that the broad masses of the British people have judged leniently or even approved the German advance into the Rhineland, that they are weary of the French outcry, that they consider the constructive German proposals worthy of attention and that they would like to see negotiations on these proposals started soon on a basis of complete equality of rights. But, on the other hand, there are the obligations which Britain has assumed *vis-à-vis* France under Locarno and the more recent commitments arising out of the four Locarno Powers' Memorandum of March 19.<sup>9</sup> Parliament knows that these latter commitments are the price Britain has paid to avoid war.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 2, footnote 8.

<sup>9</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.



How is harmony between the attitude of the people and the supposed political necessities arising from the existing commitments to be achieved? On the one hand, Parliament, in accordance with public opinion, is opposing one-sided military and political commitments; on the other hand, it neither wishes nor is able to hinder the Government in the fulfilment of obligations once undertaken. It disapproves of the German action and is very far from wishing to adopt the attitude of public opinion, which, in a word, is pro-German. Nor, however, does it wish to allow France to draw it into a more or less covert policy of encirclement against Germany; in the long run, it, like public opinion, desires the speedy start of constructive negotiations. Parliament feels the need at last to recognize Germany's unrestricted equality of rights, but, on the other hand, it knows that the practical and psychological prerequisites for clear Anglo-German co-operation do not exist. It is aware of the fact that Anglo-French political cooperation cannot at present be dissolved, and yet only reluctantly endures France's blackmailing pressure for a purely anti-German orientation of British policy.

Profoundly discontented on all these scores, Members of Parliament view the Government with a critical eye in this matter too and accuse them of lack of foresight, indecision, and lack of the will to impose their leadership.

#### (4) The safeguarding of peace.

In view of the present grave difficulties, Parliament is more than ever involved in the vicious circle which has been presented since the end of the war by the problem of safeguarding peace. Yesterday's debate, especially the speeches by Churchill and Sir Austen Chamberlain, illustrated this very clearly. The circle is formed and completed roughly as follows: "No isolation; but no alliances either; safeguarding peace by organizing collective support; collective action against the aggressor; therefore, if need be, lapsing into war? Possibly world war against local war, i.e., the deliberate provocation of that catastrophe which the system of safeguarding peace was actually designed to prevent? Rearmament so as to attain a state of constant readiness in order to fulfil collective obligations? No, the limitation of obligations to spheres of direct influence; in fact a limitation of the collective system determined by self-interest; lapsing into regional agreements resembling alliances; but would not plain isolation then be better?"

Probably no Member of Parliament makes the whole circuit from beginning to end in the manner described above. Each of them stops at the point which best suits his political complexion and reasoning. Each of them, however, must realize, under attack from those who think otherwise, that he is standing on slippery ground which is on all sides equally difficult to defend. Ultimately, collective security



always means waging war on war, and it cannot be supported to its logical conclusion by people who pursue the maintenance of peace as the highest political aim.

These facts account for Britain's almost despairing struggle to find a workable system for preserving peace, which is now once again being pursued in connection with the Abyssinian problem and the remilitarization of the Rhineland. That the differences of opinion on this extend even to within the Government becomes clearly apparent when one compares the two statements made yesterday by Eden and by Neville Chamberlain respectively. Eden expressed his conviction that the League of Nations concept had gained strength as the result of the most recent crises, while Chamberlain stated that the last twelve months had shown that the weapons of the League of Nations were not yet capable of firing.

It is only natural that the Member of Parliament, in his own perplexity with regard to the security problem, should expect and demand clear guidance from the Government. Since, as the problem is insoluble, they cannot give him this guidance, his criticism on this matter, too, is directed against those in charge of political affairs, whom he accuses of lack of purpose and the gift of leadership.

The overall picture drawn above shows the exceptional difficulties with which the British Government are having to contend in conducting their policy. Hemmed in by public opinion on the one hand and by external commitments on the other, and dependent upon a Parliament which has become more critical and which is struggling in vain to find clarity, they will only be able to pursue their difficult path of mediation in Europe very warily, and will, in this, be compelled, in the interests of preserving their own position, to make concessions, sometimes to one quarter and sometimes to another.

HOESCH

## No. 264

9172/E645375-76

*Ambassador Moltke to Minister President Göring*

WARSAW, April 7, 1936.

DEAR MINISTER PRESIDENT: Last night I was informed through Lieutenant Colonel Bodenschatz<sup>1</sup> that you had expressed your consent to the preliminary agreement [*Punktation*], the draft of which I submitted to you with my letter of April 3.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile it has proved

<sup>1</sup> Personal Adjutant to Göring.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (5482/E382283-87); a marginal note on the draft preliminary agreement, which differed from the final version on the points here listed, reads: "Telephone immediately that I agree. G[öring]." See also document No. 261.

possible here for me to obtain some further improvements in the text, namely:

- (1) The deletion of the gold clause and its replacement by the Złoty clause;
- (2) The reinstatement of "reduction in loads" in the agenda of the first Commission;
- (3) A waiver of the statement that the Paris Treaty<sup>3</sup> must be maintained.

I enclose a copy of the text as it now runs.

The preliminary agreement was signed today. The Commission for regulating current transit traffic has thereupon also started work today.

With the expression of my highest regard,

Heil Hitler!

VON MOLTKE<sup>4</sup>

9172/E645382-83

[Enclosure]

WARSAW, April 7, 1936.

Preliminary agreement [*Punktation*] for a provisional settlement in the matter of the current charges and arrears, payable by the Deutsche Reichsbahngesellschaft to the Polish State Railways, and arising from transit traffic carried on in accordance with the provisions of the German-Polish Treaty of April 21, 1921, on the freedom of transit between East Prussia and the rest of the Reich.<sup>3</sup>

I. The following procedure regarding the settlement of current payments has been agreed for the period designated below:

As from March 25, 1936, the current charges shall be settled monthly, by the method of transfer, to a value not exceeding 1,500,000 RM (equivalent to 3,195,000 Złoty).

This arrangement applies to the charges for transports effected during the period from March 25, 1936, to December 31, 1936.

With regard to the monthly charges falling due in this period, Germany shall make payments on account direct to the Bank Polski as from May 1, 1936; namely, on May 1, the amount of 1,850,000 RM (equivalent to 3,940,000 Złoty) and as from June 1, 1936, monthly, the amount of 1,500,000 RM (equivalent to 3,195,000 Złoty).

A Joint Commission shall be appointed which is to meet as quickly as possible in Warsaw, and whose task it will be to ensure as great

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 151, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> Moltke also sent a copy of this letter to Senior Counsellor Roediger under cover of a letter of Apr. 7 (9172/E645377) in which he stated that it had been impossible to insist on certain further alterations partly because of time and partly because Göring's consent to the draft of Apr. 3 (see footnote 2 above) had been communicated to him by telephone and had thereby come to the knowledge of the Poles.

a volume of traffic as possible within the limits of the aforementioned maximum amount of payments.

This object shall be achieved, *inter alia*, by a reduction in loads, especially, where possible, by the concentration of transit traffic on the shortest main routes, in so far as this is technically feasible.

II. The following procedure has been agreed for the settlement of arrears:

A German-Polish Commission shall meet as quickly as possible in Warsaw with the object of effecting the discharge of the arrears which have accumulated up to March 25, 1936.

The German side declare their consent in principle to undertaking the discharge by means of German deliveries of goods as well as by [employing] current and non-recurrent payments due from Poland to Germany. All other possibilities, such as, for example, settlement by means of bonds of the Italian Tobacco Loan,<sup>5</sup> discharge of one-third of the arrears by a secured obligation of the Reich Government, etc., shall be studied by the Commission.

Both Governments are agreed that in the matter of the Interessens-Gemeinschaft in Katowice,<sup>6</sup> discussions shall be arranged as promptly as possible, about the value of the assets (capital shares and outstanding claims) as well as about the methods for offsetting. Poland, at the same time, reserves the possibility of also including in this settlement the matter of assets belonging to Polish nationals in Germany. Until these questions have been settled, one-third of the arrears shall be set aside for the purpose of a final settlement in the sense of the foregoing paragraph.

V. MOLTKE

J. SZEMBEK

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<sup>5</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 528, enclosure, and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> For previous documents on the largely German-owned Interessens-Gemeinschaft Kattowitz-Königshütte Laura enterprises in Polish Upper Silesia, see vol. I of this Series, document No. 473, vol. II, *passim*, vol. III, documents Nos. 401 and 496, and vol. IV, document No. 474 with footnote 6 thereto.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On April 8, when the Committee of Thirteen met at Geneva to consider the Italo-Abyssinian dispute, the French Government addressed to the British, and communicated to the Belgian and the Italian Governments, a memorandum commenting in detail on, and replying to, the German memorandum of March 31 (document No. 242). At the same time the French Government communicated to the Governments of the three Locarno Powers a declaration containing the French proposals for a constructive peace settlement. This plan envisaged, *inter alia*, establishing a system of regional *ententes* within the European framework under the supervision of a European Commission, which should be an organ of the League of Nations and have at its disposal a

permanent international force, and that all the associated States should undertake to respect the existing territorial status and make no demands for modification for a twenty-five-year period. A section on economic proposals for Europe was also included.

These two memoranda were also released for publication on April 8 (for an English translation see *The Times* of April 9, 1936). The French texts were sent to Berlin by the German Consul in Geneva on that date in telegrams Nos. 23 (6710/E508884-99) and 24 (6710/E508901-09). For German comment on the first memorandum see document No. 272. The Foreign Ministry archives also contain an unsigned memorandum of April 9 (6710/E508910-16) commenting on some of the points contained in the French Peace Plan but noting in general that these "counter-proposals" contained "nothing particularly new".]

### No. 265

6710/E508919-20

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 206 of April 8

PARIS, April 8, 1936—[7:10 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received April 8—8:15 p.m.

II R 1024.

Madame Tabouis,<sup>2</sup> whose reports, as is well known, vary considerably in value, has recently repeated in *L'Œuvre* the assertion that the French Government, regarding the German reply<sup>3</sup> as inadequate given the terms of the Locarno Powers' resolution,<sup>4</sup> are considering imposing sanctions on Germany independently and without regard to the other Locarno Powers. The measures would in such a case be limited to an embargo on the export of certain products and to financial sanctions. The necessary preparations, it is said, have been made by the Ministries concerned.

I would venture to comment on this as follows:

From the *economic* point of view I regard a general embargo on exports or imports, or the imposition of maximum tariffs, which would have the same effect, as unlikely, at any rate before the elections, in view of the difficult economic and financial situation. Grave doubts are felt here about the effectiveness of an embargo on the export of certain war and other essential raw materials. Financial measures, which might also possibly at the same time be designed to lead to a more speedy liquidation of the clearing account,<sup>5</sup> do not appear to be a

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris Embassy draft (M208/M006631-32).

<sup>2</sup> Geneviève Tabouis, French journalist and diplomatic correspondent of *L'Œuvre*.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 214, footnote 1.



*priori* out of the question even before the elections, since an energetic gesture, which would at the same time be of use to the French economy, might appear desirable to the Government.

From the *political* point of view no forecast is possible at present. The French Government's original intention to press for the imposition of sanctions on Germany at the League of Nations has for the time being receded into the background in view of the completely negative attitude of the British Government and the reluctance of a large number of other States. The question is further complicated for France by the dilemma that the lifting of sanctions against Italy, which she desires, can scarcely be linked with the simultaneous advocacy of sanctions against Germany. Whether in the circumstances the French Government will perhaps decide independently to carry out sanctions measures against Germany cannot be guessed until matters develop in Geneva. In any case, I have at the moment no concrete evidence pointing to the correctness of Madame Tabouis' statement that the French Government would act independently.

FORSTER

## No. 266

6710/E508879-80

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 207 of April 8

PARIS, April 8, 1936—[7:30 p.m.].<sup>1</sup>

Received April 8—8:40 p.m.

II R 1020.

Information which has reached me is consistent in confirming that the French reply<sup>2</sup> to the German Peace Plan,<sup>3</sup> and in particular to the part which relates to the abrogation of the Locarno Pact, is very harsh both in content and in form. The responsibility for this is reported to lie partly with the influence exercised by Mandel,<sup>4</sup> who is continuing to agitate and who is being egged on by influential Jewish circles (Rothschilds) and emigrants, and also by Flandin, and partly with that nucleus in the Quai D'Orsay which is known to be anti-German and which drew up the draft in accordance with its own wishes. This tendency, it is said, has been increased by the Heads of Missions who have been summoned to Paris,<sup>5</sup> particularly by François-Poncet. The latter once again felt obliged to draw attention to alleged difficulties in Germany's domestic

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris draft (6403/E475034-35).

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242.

<sup>4</sup> Georges Mandel, French Minister of Posts and Telegraphs.

<sup>5</sup> The French Ambassadors in Berlin, Brussels, London and Rome had been summoned to Paris and took part in consultations there on Apr. 3; see *The Times* of Apr. 4, 1936.

affairs, particularly in her financial and economic situation, and to have claimed above all that "authoritative German circles" are openly scoffing at "the feeble French attitude" and are expressing the conviction that, as a result of internal divisions and the paralysis which has affected her ability to conduct a foreign policy, France will have no option but to put up with what has happened. Other Heads of Missions are said to have stated that plain speaking was essential in order to prevent doubts as to France's power from gaining further ground among the Central European and Baltic States.

The manner in which the German Peace Plan was represented to the German public is described as having also caused annoyance; allegedly the conviction was undisguisedly expressed that, as all the other Powers had failed, Germany alone was in a position, and could claim the right, to bring about a new order in Europe.

This assessment of the general situation is reported to have resulted in a growing sense of regret in the last few days that the German action was not answered at once by mobilization. Now that this has not been done, the fortifications question, on which Germany has as yet given no binding undertaking even for the interim period, has, it is said, become the crucial issue of the Rhineland conflict today. French intransigence on this issue is to be clearly expressed in the reply. In this connection it is said to be fully realized here that weighty differences with Britain and probably divergences of opinion with Belgium, too, are to be expected in Geneva.

I would add that, according to two reports, Sarraut himself toned down, in several places, the harsh wording of the draft, which he considered too extreme.

FORSTER

## No. 267

4602/E190283-86

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 8, 1936.

The French Ambassador called on me today to discuss the French Memoranda,<sup>1</sup> which were published today, and the situation in general. He did not, however, bring the Memoranda with him, and it transpired that he was not acquainted with the final version. He requested that the French proposals should be carefully examined and that everything should not be rejected from the very start. I replied that we were certainly prepared to study the French counter-proposals

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

objectively, but that I had already heard that the French reply to the German Memorandum of March 31<sup>2</sup> was harsh and polemic in the extreme. The Ambassador did not deny this; he was not acquainted with the final version, he said, but the original draft had been twenty pages long and had been condensed at his suggestion. We must not take French criticism too seriously; it would be wiser to let the French exhaust their rage [*sich austoben*]. Nor should we deceive ourselves as to the dissatisfaction in France, which was very considerable—less on account of the abrogation of Locarno and the reoccupation of the Rhineland than on account of the methods we had used and our refusal of all negotiations, arbitration procedures, etc. The policy of the *fait accompli* alarmed the French man in the street about future developments. We should not underestimate the mistrust which our methods had aroused in France.

More important, however, than the French counter-memorandum were the French proposals for shaping the future. These fell into three parts, the third of which dealt with economic questions, and he would like to draw special attention to the importance of this third section. Both documents (for this also applied to the French reply) contained passages which were intended to elicit a response in Germany, or to show that France was prepared to entertain Germany's ideas. The fact that French counter proposals had been made at all was proof, he said, that France was ready to take up the Führer and Chancellor's whole proposal for creating a new peace system. The significance of this fact should not be overlooked. The primary object now, he said, was to find points of contact for an understanding, in other words to search out points from whence bridges could be built for an understanding.

He said that the difficulties were, of course, still very great. The question of what was to become of the Rhineland, and what of the Locarno Treaty, was still quite open, and it was extremely difficult for the French to swallow the reoccupation of the Rhineland. The Ambassador also brought up the question of fortifications. When I developed the familiar arguments, he gave me to understand that the French would certainly reconcile themselves to the Rhineland being re-fortified, provided we offered adequate safeguards to our Eastern neighbours. He did not appear to want to contest in any way our right to fortify, nor did he make any reservations on this point in respect of future negotiations. He repeated several times, however, that, in the French view, we would be fortifying the Rhine frontier in order to obtain a free hand in the East. The construction of fortifications would be regarded in France as indicating that we were planning aggression in the East, unless, of course, we were to give adequate

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 242.



guarantees for their security to our Eastern neighbours within the framework of the forthcoming negotiations.

The Ambassador then asked me whether we had had any ideas as to who should participate in the negotiations and whether we were prepared to negotiate in the Council of the League of Nations. I told him that we envisaged the negotiations beginning (after the French elections) within the circle of the former Locarno Powers, and perhaps being subsequently extended, in a second phase, to include other Powers. This aspect of the problem, however, had not yet received much consideration. On account of its composition, the Council of the League of Nations appeared to me hardly suitable; it included three South Americans, one Australian, and other Powers as well who were not concerned in the problem. The Ambassador replied that he shared my opinion with regard to the Council of the League, and it was for this reason that Briand's old European Commission<sup>3</sup> had once more been served up in the French counter-proposals. It was thought in Paris that this might perhaps constitute an appropriate body for conducting the negotiations. (Contrary to my expectation, the Ambassador did not advance the argument that, on account of her alliances, France would not be in a position, or would only with great difficulty be able, to negotiate in the absence of the Poles, Czechs, etc.)

The Ambassador then enquired when Count Welzeck<sup>4</sup> would take up his appointment and pressed for this to be expedited. The delay in filling this post was beginning to give rise to criticism in Paris, and certain political conclusions were being drawn. If, in two or three weeks' time, Count Welzeck were to make a friendly speech on presenting his credentials, this might well have a very good effect.

Finally the Ambassador told me that he had really only come to Berlin now in order to refute the rumours according to which he was about to go on long leave for an indefinite period, and in order to hear what our reactions were to the French Memoranda and perhaps also to attempt, in cooperation with us, to establish points of contact. He was thinking of returning to Paris at the end of Easter week, round about the 18th, and of remaining in France until the elections were over. Thus he would not be returning to Berlin until he had made contact with whatever new Government came into power and with other influential personages.

The Ambassador asked for particulars as to the day on which the Führer and Chancellor and the Reich Foreign Minister were expected to return to Berlin, without, however, saying that he wished or hoped to be

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<sup>3</sup> i.e., the European Commission proposed by Briand in his Memorandum on the organization of a European Federal Union of May 1, 1930 (for the text see *British Documents, Second Series*, vol. I, No. 186).

<sup>4</sup> Johannes Count von Welzeck, German Ambassador in Spain, had been appointed Ambassador in France, a post which had been vacant since the death of Ambassador Köster on Dec. 31, 1935.



received by either. He stressed, moreover, that his visit was not on instructions and was merely for his own and my information. As I was not yet acquainted with the contents of the French Memoranda, I was not in a position to offer any comment on them.

BÜLOW

## No. 268

6710/E508698-701

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

BERLIN, April 8, 1936.

sent April 9.

[zu] II R 946.<sup>1</sup>

II R 967.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 29<sup>1</sup> and your despatch A.IV.1.c.4.d of April 4.<sup>2</sup>

It would not appear desirable at the present moment, when further political developments cannot as yet be foreseen and the emphasis lies on the exchange of views with the Western Powers, for us to allow ourselves to be drawn into a factual discussion with Beneš of the details of the German Peace Plan<sup>3</sup> or to consider in advance certain issues in German-Czechoslovak relations which affect the Peace Plan.

It is our impression that what M. Beneš is primarily aiming at is to join in our exchange of views with the Western Powers and in possible forthcoming negotiations in good time, in order thus to gain the influence he wants on the future shaping of events and above all in order, as far as possible, to prevent the differentiation which he fears between the settlement in the West and the settlement in the East or South-East. In spite of all her efforts, Czechoslovakia did not take part in the negotiations when the Locarno Pact was drawn up. M. Beneš was only brought in at the end. In our opinion it is not to be expected that Czechoslovakia will support our plan in its present form. In speaking to you, M. Beneš may give the impression that he is ready to play the part of honest broker between Germany and France; but we can have no confidence in his rôle of mediator after previous experiences and in view both of Czechoslovakia's known political attitude and of her close ties of interest with France and Russia. Moreover, there can be no doubt that M. Beneš' tactics are aimed at tempting us into the open and making us define our intentions prematurely. We have, however, no reason at this stage to commit ourselves in any

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 256.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 258.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 242.

way. Quite apart from this, the cardinal point of the Peace Plan is for us not the settlement in the East, but the settlement in the West. The latter must be cleared up first. If M. Beneš asserts that we have said that we consider that the German-Czechoslovak non-aggression pact proposed in our peace offer would be compatible with Czechoslovakia's existing alliances, this assertion is inaccurate. It is possible that, during conversations here, M. Mastný may have touched on this question. He was, however, given no assurances of any kind.

If M. Beneš reopens the conversation with you after Easter, you should reply as follows:

Our plan of April 1 is an offer which, in the form of a programme, broadly outlines how we consider peace should in future be secured in Europe. Naturally its details are open to discussion by the Powers concerned in the plan. It should, however, be borne in mind in dealing with it in future that the plan represents our reply to the remaining Locarno Powers' London document of March 19,<sup>4</sup> so it now depends, in the first place, on how these Powers respond to our offer. In these circumstances, future discussion would be complicated rather than assisted if a discussion on questions of detail were to take place already now between Germany and a State like Czechoslovakia, which is not one of the remaining Locarno Powers. This applies all the more since, according to press reports, the French Government have drawn up a comprehensive plan of their own. In these circumstances you should reply only to one of the points brought up by M. Beneš, namely, the question as to whether we regard the German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaty of October 16, 1925,<sup>5</sup> as still in force, since this, in contrast to his other points, is a question which is not connected with recent events or with the German Peace Plan. In the German Government's opinion, this Arbitration Treaty is not affected and should still be regarded as being in force. This may indeed be concluded from the fact that we have quite recently reached an understanding with Czechoslovakia on the composition of the Conciliation Commission<sup>6</sup> provided for in the German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaty of October 16, 1925.

The above statement of views is independent of our assessment of the announced French plan. You should evade any discussion of the latter.

I look forward to a report on your next conversation in due course.

BÜLOW

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<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 26, footnote 4.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 256, footnote 1.

## No. 269

6710/E508930-31

*The Ambassador in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1553

LONDON, April 8, 1936.

Received April 9.

II R 1027.

Subject: Conversation on the political situation between Counsellor of Embassy Prince Bismarck and Mr. Sargent.<sup>1</sup>

Counsellor of Embassy Prince Bismarck lunched today with Sargent, who told him the following with regard to the political situation:

The British Government could still see no way out of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, which had in particular been very greatly aggravated by the dropping of poison-gas bombs by the Italians. Not only had this act greatly incensed public opinion here, but it also represented a new and grave breach on Italy's part of international obligations definitively undertaken by her.

With regard to the Locarno crisis, Mr. Sargent gave it as his opinion that the question of the interim period had by no means yet been finally clarified by the German reply.<sup>2</sup> France would most certainly insist on obtaining some concessions in the fortifications question. Mr. Sargent spoke sceptically, too, with regard to the initiation of any negotiations on a general peace programme. Before it was possible to make any practical approach to these vast and far-reaching plans, he said, the preliminary questions would have to be settled through detailed diplomatic discussions. In no circumstances should it be allowed to happen that a conference was convened which subsequently produced no results. Such an outcome would be far worse than a provisional state of no negotiations at all. He could, he said, only go on repeating the British Government's view that Europe's confidence in new agreements was still today very badly shaken by Germany's action. The "claim of National Socialist Germany to unite all members of the German race within the Reich" still continued to be a subject of most serious concern among the Eastern European nations and in particular in Czechoslovakia, whose Government, as he could assure me, were extremely disturbed about this.

When Bismarck referred to the offer of non-aggression pacts and to Germany's readiness to return to the League of Nations, Mr. Sargent replied that non-aggression pacts would afford only a comparatively small measure of security to the states with which they were to be concluded. Nor did he regard Germany's return to the League of Nations

<sup>1</sup> Orme G. Sargent, Assistant Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the German Plan of Mar. 31; see document No. 242.

as a sufficient guarantee against the supposed danger of German acts of violence with the object of altering the *status quo*, but gave it as his opinion that a pacification could only be achieved if Germany declared officially that in no circumstances did she desire to alter the *status quo* in Central and Eastern Europe. In this connection he suggested that Germany might nevertheless conclude an agreement with Czechoslovakia similar to that which she had concluded with Poland.<sup>3</sup>

Prince Bismarck of course countered Sargent's statements, where necessary, with appropriate bluntness.

HOESCH

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<sup>3</sup> Presumably a reference to the German-Polish Declaration of Jan. 26, 1934, for the text of which see vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

## No. 270

6680/H096413-15

*Credit Treaty Supplementary to the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods  
concluded between the Chinese Government and Herr Hans Klein  
on August 23, 1934*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 8, 1936.

### Article 1

The Chinese Government declare their agreement to the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods of August 23, 1934, concluded between the Chinese Government and Herr Hans Klein, being taken over by the German Reich Government.

### Article 2

The German Reich Government shall open for the Chinese Government a commercial credit amounting to 100 million RM (in words: one hundred million Reichsmark).

### Article 3

The Chinese Government may avail themselves of this commercial credit by purchasing German industrial and other products in accordance with the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods.

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<sup>1</sup> On Aug. 23, 1934, Klein concluded a treaty with the Nanking Government for the exchange of Chinese raw materials, etc. for German industrial products, etc. (6680/H096105-10).



## Article 4

Both the Chinese Government and the German Reich Government shall be free to regulate the official payments requiring to be made by China in Germany and by Germany in China through the exchange of goods.

## Article 5

By means of supplies of Chinese agricultural products and mineral raw materials in accordance with the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods, this commercial credit will, in the course of current trading, automatically be paid off and again renewed.

## Article 6

The credit and any other assets which may accrue shall be at the disposal of the Chinese Government or of their plenipotentiaries.

## Article 7

The German Reich Government shall make this commercial credit, amounting to 100 million RM, available at the Deutsche Golddiskontbank and shall charge this Bank to make the payments arising from this credit and from the exchange of goods.

## Article 8

The Chinese Government for their part shall charge the Central Bank of China, Shanghai, to make the payments arising from the exchange of goods.

## Article 9

No initial commission shall be charged for the provision of this commercial credit.

## Article 10

Interest on the availed credit as well as on assets accruing shall be uniformly fixed at 5 per cent per annum. No charges or commission shall be charged.

## Article 11

This supplementary Credit Treaty shall form part of the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods and shall therefore be subject to its provisions. For the purpose of constituting an arbitration tribunal, Article 17 of the Treaty on the Exchange of Goods shall be supplemented as follows, this also to apply to the main Treaty:

Either party shall be allowed a period of three months in which to nominate a representative on the arbitration tribunal, counting from the date of despatch by the other party of a registered letter containing an invitation to do so. The invitation must, at the same time, give notice of the nomination of the other party's own representative. Should the interim period elapse without action having been taken, then the regular courts in the country of that party which is not in default shall be competent to give judgement in the case.

Should there be no decision as to the chairman, then the chairman shall be designated by the German Reich Ministry of Economics in consultation with the Chinese Minister of Finance. The chairman shall decide upon the place where the tribunal shall meet.

### Article 12

This supplementary Credit Treaty is done in two copies, each in the German and Chinese languages. The Chinese plenipotentiary declares that the Chinese version fully accords with the German version.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> This copy is unsigned.

### No. 271

6710/E509040-42

#### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 9, 1936.

II R 1053.

The French Ambassador called on me this afternoon at my request. I had told him yesterday<sup>1</sup> that I hoped to inform him of my impressions on the French Memoranda.<sup>2</sup> I accordingly told him that the French rejoinder to our Memorandum of March 31<sup>3</sup> was extremely spiteful in tone and was consciously based on false arguments. I cited as examples of this the allegation of [our] making no mention of the demilitarized zone at the Peace Conference, the false assertion that we had described the occupation of the Ruhr as motivating Locarno, the allegation of [our making] a reservation with regard to colonies as a reason for again seceding from the League of Nations, and more of a similar nature. I then went on to point out that, under the cloak of general security, France wanted to build up a collective system, which was, in actual fact, nothing but a policy of sanctions and military alliances. The difference between West and East, picked out for comment in the French Note, was simply that there were British and Italian guarantors

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 267.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242.

for the West, whereas in the East guarantors neither existed nor were conceivable. Of the French Peace Plan I spoke in mild terms, but I did not disguise the fact that it was impracticable, as it could in no wise be realized. I particularly emphasized that there existed a third, secret, Note, in which France was obviously demanding sanctions or something of the sort from Britain on the basis of the Locarno guarantee. Finally, I expressed the hope that it would prove possible to pacify our justifiably incensed press to a degree which would permit open debate to be limited to the two peace plans and the search for constructive factors.

The Ambassador's counter-arguments were even weaker than I expected. For instance he did not dispute at all that France wished to base her policy on military alliances, at least until such time as a supranational State with military forces at its disposal was created. Naturally he denied that the tone of the French Note was spiteful, but he brought out strongly that bitterness over our methods, as he had already told me yesterday, and, as he added today, over certain election speeches, was very strong in France. The conversation then became involved in comments on French domestic politics and the personalities of individual French Ministers. The conversation became very friendly, and at this stage François-Poncet warned me most seriously and urgently that France could not possibly reconcile herself to the present situation and let the German denunciation of the Locarno Treaty stand. Without mentioning sanctions, he let it be understood that some kind of measures would be taken against Germany. As to the possibility or otherwise of forthcoming negotiations, he expressed similar views to those expressed by Flandin in his *Daily Telegraph* interview.<sup>4</sup>

I thereupon told him that sanctions-type measures by the French would ruin everything; just as the whole of Italy had formed a united front against Britain on account of sanctions, the whole of Germany would close its ranks against France, whereas at the moment there existed no bad feeling, animosity, etc. of any kind against the French people, and the fact that the Führer was striving to achieve a lasting understanding with France was, after all, well known.

The Ambassador thereupon told me that we should not deceive ourselves over the ill-feeling in France; it was, however, a fact that even today Germany was more popular in France than was Britain, and that an astonishingly rapid development towards a *rapprochement* between the two peoples had been interrupted by the Rhineland action. The Ambassador criticized Britain and British policy and declared that he was still very concerned about the danger of a clash of arms between Britain and Italy. The consequences would be unpredictable.

<sup>4</sup> Given in Geneva on April 8, published on April 9, 1936. A correction was published in *Le Temps* on April 10.

The tension in Europe was extremely unhealthy and could only be compared to the years 1912 and 1913, while the Russian factor was again playing an ominous part.<sup>5</sup>

BÜLOW

<sup>5</sup> An account of this conversation based on the document here printed was circulated to the German Missions in Europe (except those in Athens, Dublin, Lisbon, Luxemburg, Sofia and the Embassy to the Holy See) and to the Consulate at Geneva, in despatch II R 1053 of Apr. 13 (6710/E509049-53).

## No. 272

6710/E508948-59

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

Airgram en clair

URGENT

BERLIN, April 9, 1936.  
II R 1036.

For guidance on language to be held.

The French Memorandum<sup>2</sup> gives rise to the following comments:

Individual arguments against the French Memorandum.

#### *Concerning Paragraph I.*

(1) It is not true that France would have been entitled, after the German action of March 7, at once to take counter-measures for reestablishing the legal situation and for avenging the "hostile act" allegedly committed by Germany. For even if France does not recognize as valid the argument that Germany's action was justified by the conclusion of the Franco-Russian Military Alliance, she could still only proceed, on her own showing, according to the provisions of the Rhine Pact. The latter, however, only provides for immediate counter action against any violation of the demilitarization provisions in the event of an unprovoked attack. There can be no doubt whatever that the re-occupation of the Rhineland does not constitute any sort of attack on France, and this was at once acknowledged by the British Government. Under the Rhine Pact, therefore, France, if she considered the German action was not justified, had no other course open to her than to appeal to the Council of the League of Nations. This action was, therefore, not at all a sign of any particular political moderation.

(2) The Memorandum asserts that nobody wishes to deny Germany her equality of rights. That is a play on words. The entire French Memorandum proves that in reality France is very far from recognizing German equality of rights. Is it equality of rights that one State should be compelled unilaterally and in perpetuity to refrain from

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all German Missions in Europe (except those in Luxemburg and at the Holy See), the Embassy in Turkey and the Consulate at Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the French Memorandum of Apr. 8 replying to the German proposals of Mar. 31; see Editors' Note, p. 402.



putting its own frontier territory in a state of defence against military invasion by its neighbour?

*Concerning Paragraph II.*

(1) It is not true that the German Delegation at Versailles at the time accepted the demilitarization of the Rhineland without protest. It suffices to draw attention to the following statements of principle contained in the Memorandum submitted by the German Delegation at Versailles.<sup>3</sup>

"The Government of the German Republic are inspired by the conviction that the League of Nations will carry the idea of justice to realization, and are, therefore, ready, on the understanding that Germany shall enter into the League of Nations immediately upon the conclusion of Peace as a Power with equal rights, to agree to the fundamental ideas of the conditions proposed in Part V regarding military, naval and air fighting forces. In particular, the Government of the German Republic are ready to concede the abolition of universal military service on condition that this is 'the initiation of a general limitation of the armaments by all nations' and that within two years at most of the conclusion of Peace the other States also, in accordance with Article VIII of the enemy Covenant of the League of Nations, undertake to reduce their armaments and to abolish universal military service . . ."

"On condition that she enters the League of Nations on the conclusion of Peace, and in the expectation of reciprocity later on, Germany is ready, in accordance with the draft Treaty, to dismantle her fortresses in the West and to establish there a zone unoccupied by any military forces."

Thus at that time the German Delegation quite unequivocally made the unilateral demilitarization of the Rhineland and the acceptance of the other unilateral draft provisions dependent above all on the precondition that the principle of reciprocity should be established.

(2) The primary reason for the German action of March 7 lies in the Franco-Soviet Alliance, by which France for her part destroyed the legal and political basis of the Rhine Pact. The historical statements contained in the German Peace Plan of March 31<sup>4</sup> on the demilitarization provisions are intended solely to elaborate this main reason, in that they make clear that the inclusion of the demilitarization provisions in the Rhine Pact cannot, either politically or historically, be placed in the same category as an agreement entirely freely undertaken, that in

<sup>3</sup> This Memorandum, together with an annex, was communicated under a letter of May 29, 1919, from the President of the German Peace Delegation to the President of the Peace Conference; for the texts see *Foreign Relations of the United States, The Paris Peace Conference, 1919* (Washington, 1946), vol. VI, pp. 795-901.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 242.

this case it was far more a question of a residue of the Versailles Dictate, which, in view of the constrained political situation of Germany at the time, she was then not yet able to repudiate. The German Government have in no way asserted that Germany concluded the Rhine Pact under the pressure of the occupation of the Ruhr. They merely stressed that the negotiations at that time were immediately preceded by a breach of legality by France, namely, the occupation of the Ruhr. Germany's position of constraint at the time is illustrated by the simple fact that at the time of Germany's offer of a Rhine Pact, France was still occupying the first Rhineland zone, contrary to treaty, beyond the envisaged date.

(3) It is not true that the German thesis underlying the German action of March 7 can be interpreted in the sense that Germany is claiming for herself the right to repudiate any and every territorial treaty provision in Europe by unilateral action. The demagogic tendency of this accusation is perfectly obvious. The German Government have unequivocally and solemnly declared that they have no intention whatever of solving territorial questions unilaterally—i.e., by force of arms.

### *Concerning Paragraph III.*

In this section of the Memorandum the legal arguments for the German action are simply brushed aside, without any attempt at a factual refutation. As soon as the Franco-Russian alliance was announced, the German Government drew attention to its incompatibility with the Rhine Pact. If the other Signatories to the Rhine Pact were of a different opinion, why did they not negotiate with Germany freely and openly at the time on the subject, instead of agreeing as they did among themselves, for reasons which are not clear and without consulting Germany, to reject the German view? Why, when Germany persisted in her attitude notwithstanding, did France, not on her part consider it necessary to clarify the question raised by Germany before deciding to ratify her Treaty of Alliance?

### *Concerning Paragraph IV.*

The German Government have rejected all those proposals in the London document of March 19<sup>5</sup> which impose a unilateral burden on Germany and therefore discriminate [against her]. The French Memorandum contains no valid justification for these proposals either. It merely asserts that a German gesture is necessary for the re-establishment of confidence. Confidence can never be restored by Germany's acceptance of unilateral and dishonourable burdens. In reality the interim period proposed in the document of March 19 has

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

as its dual object the imposition of a humiliating punishment on Germany for her alleged breach of treaty (the occupation by foreign troops of a strip of German territory 20 km. wide, the subjection of the whole Rhineland to international control) and the prejudicing of the final regime in the Rhineland (prohibition of the construction of fortifications).

*Concerning Paragraph V.*

(1) At the time, the German Government immediately accepted the idea of an air pact between the Western Powers as first raised for discussion in the London Communiqué of February 1935.<sup>6</sup> It is not their fault that negotiations on a pact of this nature were not immediately embarked upon. When later, in the summer of 1935, in view of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and the antagonism between Britain and Italy which then became apparent, the German Government expressed the opinion that the conclusion of an air pact was hardly practicable before this conflict was resolved, they were, in so doing, merely pointing out the actual situation, which did not in fact affect them, without withdrawing their agreement in principle.

The proposal for an air pact between the Western Powers was not, in the above-mentioned London Communiqué, attached to a demand that such a pact should at the same time also settle the question of air disarmament. These are in fact two different problems, which must be dealt with according to their own rules. The German Government, however, have never refused to negotiate on the subject of air disarmament too, and have in their new Peace Plan put forward definite practical proposals towards this end.

(2) It is very characteristic that in the French Memorandum the prohibition of the construction of fortifications in the Rhineland, which is earlier described as a gesture to re-establish confidence, is here demanded as an essential ingredient of the system of collective security as understood by the French. When the Memorandum says, in this connection, that by refusing to accept this prohibition Germany is limiting the possibility of guaranteeing assistance to weaker States, it is thereby giving away what France is really after. It is not France's security that the non-fortification of the Rhineland is to serve, but the implementation of her special alliances. Collective security and the indivisibility of peace are simply phrases to cover a policy of intervention and special military alliances. On what grounds can France claim for herself the right to watch over peace in the East and for this purpose to retain in her possession the unilateral advantage of an easy military invasion of German territory?

<sup>6</sup> Of Feb. 3, 1935; for the text see *British Blue Book*, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5. For subsequent negotiations on an air pact see vol. IV of this Series, *passim*.



*Concerning Paragraph VI.*

This also disposes of the French objection that the non-aggression pacts which Germany is offering for the East would not do justice to the principle of collective security. In the German view there exists no general abstract formula which could be applied as the political safeguard of peace in all parts of the world. In particular, the German Government cannot consider States like France and the Soviet Union as appropriate guarantors of the safeguarding of peace in the East in the same way as Britain and Italy can be for the safeguarding of peace in the west.

(2) The German Government see no necessity for offering a special non-aggression pact to the Soviet Union if only because Germany and Russia share no common frontier. Although after the Stresa Conference the German Government declared themselves ready, under certain conditions, to conclude a collective non-aggression pact for the East too,<sup>7</sup> the situation has since been radically altered by the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance. The fact, however, that Germany is not thinking of withdrawing from every collective commitment is proved by her readiness to return to the League of Nations and to undertake the collective commitments which arise from its Covenant.

*Concerning Paragraph VII.*

(1) The French Memorandum seeks to rob Germany's offer to return to the League of Nations of any value by arguing that Germany offers no guarantee that she will honour international obligations. If this is the attitude the French Government adopt, why then do they want to conclude any treaties whatever with Germany?

(2) There is equally little justification for the argument that Germany, by mentioning her colonial claims, wants to secure for herself in advance the possibility of another withdrawal from the League of Nations. In mentioning these claims Germany has merely expressed an expectation; she has not in any way made it a condition. The fact that the colonial question needs settling afresh is admitted by the French plan<sup>8</sup> too, in that it draws up a special programme for this purpose.

(3) The proposal contained in the German Peace Plan that the treaties now to be concluded should be made subject to arbitration, was intended by Germany merely to express a principle, without establishing in detail its technical execution. She had no wish to exclude either the Council of the League of Nations or the Hague International Court, even though it is an open question and one which requires careful study as to what arbitration procedure should be used to best purpose in each individual case.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 29.

<sup>8</sup> i.e., the French Peace Plan of Apr. 8; see Editors' Note, p. 402.



*Concerning Paragraph VIII.*

The French Memorandum seeks to find fault with the statements on disarmament contained in the German Peace Plan, but does not itself put forward any concrete proposal in this respect. The German Government have always declared that they are prepared even for the most far-reaching disarmament, provided that the other States adopt the same attitude. Since, however, the past, and particularly France's attitude, have already given proof enough that too far-reaching aims in the sphere of disarmament cannot at the moment be realized, the German Government have seen fit to make entirely concrete suggestions which, it appears to them, could be realized without great difficulty. If the other Governments have other suggestions to make, which could be realized without violating the principle of the equality of rights of all States, the German Government will at all times be prepared to negotiate on such suggestions.

*Concerning Paragraph IX.*

The French comments on the German proposal that appropriate measures should be taken to put an end to incitement of the two peoples to antagonism, merely give an impression of embarrassed evasion. If the French Government can suggest any alternative way of realizing this idea, the German Government will gladly examine it. It is not the form of the agreements but their content which matters.

*Concerning Paragraph X.*

In proposing that the new treaties should be ratified in Germany and in France by a plebiscite, the German Government's sole object is, of course, to give to these treaties a particularly solemn character and to ensure that they will be respected, by making the conclusion of the treaty appear as the direct expression of the will of the people. If the French Constitution does not permit of such procedure, then the German Government can only express their regret and will naturally not take it amiss.

*Concerning the Conclusion.*

The questions raised in this part of the French Memorandum are obviously of a purely tendentious nature. The reply to them is contained in the German Peace Plan itself and in the comments already made above.

On the French Peace Plan<sup>8</sup> further instructions are reserved.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

## No. 273

6710/E509066-72

*The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1613

PARIS, April 9, 1936.

Received April 14.

II R 1056.

Subject: France and the Rhineland conflict.

I. *Introduction.*

Never, during all the time I have been serving in Paris, have I known a period when views on the international situation and on what France ought to do were as divergent, and, in individuals, have changed so frequently (abruptly, and often overnight), as has been the case since March 7. In line with my despatches to date, I would venture to try, disregarding the innumerable and fluctuating statements by individual commentators, to give some idea of what France, viewed as a whole, thinks of the Rhineland conflict and what her fundamental attitude to it is. Where, therefore, there is mention of France below, this will mean not only the present Government, the politicians, the press or public opinion, but a synthesis of all these elements, which roughly represents what people here are so fond of calling "*la France éternelle*".

II. *French foreign policy since the end of the war.*

The end of the war gave France a unique position of power in Europe and complete diplomatic and military ascendancy over Germany. Since then the whole of French foreign policy has been governed by the endeavour to preserve this ascendancy. This was the end which the system of the Versailles Treaty, the military alliances, and collective security within the framework of the League of Nations were to serve. The structure of European order, borne on these pillars, was, so to speak, to last for ever. That was the aim, and it is for its realization that French statecraft has been fighting, unimaginatively and in a basically negative way. In the course of years, stone after stone has crumbled from the structure. The failure of the Geneva Protocol,<sup>1</sup> the ending of the action in the Ruhr, the end of military control, the safeguarding of the Rhineland for us and its evacuation, the end of reparations, the consolidation of Germany under National Socialism, our withdrawal from the League of Nations, the return of the Saar to Germany, our regaining of our military sovereignty and finally the Abyssinian conflict, in which France was torn between collective security and non-

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 223, footnote 6.

intervention in affairs which did not concern her—these were the stages which, in ever more rapid succession and with increasing clarity, made it obvious that France was fighting for a marble ideal which could not stand up to the test of real life. After each stage there emerged a kind of retrospective and grudging acknowledgment of the fact that French foreign policy had failed, but each time this was realized too late for it to be possible to alter anything of what had happened, and not sufficiently profoundly to lead to a change in subsequent policy from a fruitless to a fruitful course. In spite of all her failures, France clung to her old ways of thinking and hoping and went on trying to shut her eyes to the fact that Germany's growing political and military power was fundamentally changing the diplomatic and military balance of strength between the two countries.

This foreign policy was a reflexion, though a more than distorted one, of a basic sentiment of the French people, namely, that at bottom they want peace for themselves and regard the possibility of a war with horror. This sentiment was clearly confirmed a short while ago by the attitude of the people during the Abyssinian conflict. Amidst the profound divergences of interest which arose from this war for France, too, the people's desire, which no other considerations for the future could shake, that nothing should happen which might be liable to involve France even indirectly in any danger of war, exerted continuous pressure on the Government's decisions.

### III. *France's unstable position at the beginning of 1936.*

At the beginning of 1936 France found herself in a position of insecurity and *malaise* with regard to both domestic and foreign policy.

#### *Domestic policy.*

At home the failure of a Chamber which, particularly in face of the financial and economic crisis, was more or less incapable of governing constructively, had led, during the whole of one period of office, to violent internal dissension, which the latest Cabinet has as yet hardly been able to patch up. An election campaign was imminent, which threatened to cause widespread unrest throughout the country. On top of this, the repercussions of the crisis on the financial and economic spheres, in spite of undeniable exertions in the former and some signs of improvement in the latter, weighed heavily on the country. Dissatisfaction with the methods of government as they had developed within the parliamentary regime was strong and widespread. Everyone connected with the circle of parliamentary politicians was unpopular in the extreme, indeed, downright despised. Comparisons kept being drawn with the authoritarian systems of France's two neighbours, which were regarded with great dislike and considerable



distrust, but whose great successes could not be denied. These comparisons led to constant harsh criticism, not of the parliamentary regime as such, but of the distorted form which it had assumed in France. Proposals for reform were the order of the day, though admittedly they never took shape as definite lines of policy.

#### *Foreign policy.*

Similar criticism and perplexity prevailed in the sphere of foreign policy. Annoyance with Britain took hold of wide sections of the population and sometimes expressed itself in unprecedented ways. Italy and Poland had become unreliable partners, and it was held against them that they were pursuing their own interests and going their own way. With Soviet Russia, France had got into a relationship which rendered her uneasy for reasons both of foreign and domestic policy. The Central European States and the Balkan States were regarded as vassals who, on the one hand, when they felt themselves menaced, were ready at any time to make extensive demands and ones which were awkward for France, but who, on the other hand, particularly in pursuit of their own natural economic interests, showed a tendency to draw towards the powerful German economic bloc. Finally the League of Nations, too, was developing in a direction which no longer fully corresponded in any respect to what, in French eyes, was its essential task, namely, that of constituting an instrument of collective security against Germany. But, above all, minds were increasingly burdened by a feeling, albeit one which was not consciously and clearly recognized that the accelerated rise of Germany as a power factor meant that the German-French relationship must perforce be judged from fundamentally different aspects.

#### *IV. Elements of stability.*

Naturally, in this situation, which was in many ways unstable, there also existed certain elements of stability. One of the primary factors was the attitude of the people, which is more healthy than that of their politicians, their feeling of tradition and their national consciousness, qualities which, in spite of all the grumbling and an inclination to let things take their course, give them confidence that, in the hour of need, France will find the strength and the impetus to resist the worst and to right what is wrong. To this group also belong the Armed Forces, who, admittedly, cannot work a miracle and have no desire to do so, but who are conscious of the fact that by their sensible work they have forged a serviceable instrument should anything serious happen.

#### *V. The effect of the German action of March 7.*

In the atmosphere described above, Germany's abrogation of the Locarno Treaty produced the effect of a heavy thunderstorm.



Unquestionably France finds it humiliating. This feeling has been strengthened by a series of contributory circumstances, of which I will here mention but one—that for months on end French public opinion had been directing its close attention to the Rhineland and had repeatedly either been haughtily admonishing Germany before the eyes of the world or imploring her almost anxiously not to create any *fait accompli* there.

The first reaction to the German step went to the point of asking whether this must be deemed a case of flagrant breach of the Locarno Treaty and whether mobilization should be set in train. As is known, a number of Cabinet Members spoke on the first day in favour of this measure—first and foremost M. Mandel, who also persuaded the Minister President, who is under his influence, to support his point of view, further M. Flandin and, curiously enough, apparently M. Guernut too, who, as Minister of Education, had just failed entirely in his struggle with the students and the university over Professor Jèze's lectures.<sup>2</sup> Though not, indeed, *a priori* impossible, it was improbable that the French Government would decide to extricate themselves at one blow from the situation described above by recourse to such drastic action. In retrospect it can be said that there was one moment when mobilization was perhaps more imminent than any previous calm assessment of probabilities, for all one could not exclude this possibility, would have led one to expect. That mobilization did not take place was probably determined by the Army's attitude. All three Service Ministers and all their technical advisers, with the exception, apparently, of General Georges,<sup>3</sup> who is a disciple of Weygand,<sup>4</sup> opposed mobilization because, on the one hand, they felt that it was such a serious measure that it would be impossible to go back on it without severe loss of prestige for France, and, on the other hand, they did not want a war with all its horrors, at any rate not yet and preferably not at all.

The fact that the French Government did not respond to the remilitarization of the Rhineland with mobilization is in some ways not unlike what happened in the spring of 1935, when Germany assumed her military sovereignty. There is, however, one profound difference between the situation then and now. The French reaction to the remilitarization [of the Rhineland] was something new in that this time France reached the conclusion at once, and not merely in retrospect, that she was here confronted with an event which raised the whole question of her future destiny. The feeling is general that the French

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<sup>2</sup> Gaston Paul Amédée Jèze, Professor of Law at the University of Paris and legal adviser to the Negus of Abyssinia. Pro-Italian demonstrations at his lectures had led to his withdrawal from the University after the temporary closure of the Law Faculty had failed to bring them to an end.

<sup>3</sup> Assistant Chief of the French General Staff.

<sup>4</sup> Until 1935, Chief of the French General Staff and Vice President of the Supreme War Council.

nation is now suddenly faced with problems which are not, as was the case in the Abyssinian conflict, basically of little concern to her, but are matters affecting her vital interests. The French people have been rudely shaken out of their, until now, uncertain state of mind, in which anxiety was mostly relegated to the subconscious, and this has been experienced with painful discomfiture. They are indeed still attempting every now and then to soothe themselves. They sometimes try, in spite of their fears for the future, to acknowledge that the occupation of the Rhineland is after all a matter concerning only Germany's own territory, i.e., something quite normal and resulting naturally from Germany's right to equality of status. On the other hand, they are at pains to persuade themselves that Germany is not yet as strong as she appears to be, that her financial and economic position is menaced, that her military preparations are still incomplete, etc. These attempts at self-tranquillization remain, however, superficial. Below the surface the belief is active that this point of view is inadequate, that the Rhineland conflict has at one stroke not only raised the whole question of France's relationship to Germany in all its ramifications, but also the question of her position as a Great Power in Europe. France fears that, if she does not succeed in somehow settling the conflict in accordance with her desires, not only will her German adversary triumph, but the whole of Europe, and in particular her allies, will lose their faith in the power of France, and that what would here be lost in one moment, all eternity could not restore. The result is a whirling conflict of emotions; on the one hand a kind of paralysis in the face of manifestations of the adversary's vitality, on the other a marshalling of forces to overcome this inertia and to bring the nation's own vitality into play against it.

The disputes over internal policy, which still go on, have also been subdued by this tension. The election campaign,<sup>5</sup> so far at least, is not of that tumultuous nature which, but for the Rhineland conflict, might have been expected with certainty. Today it must be termed unlikely that that uncertainty in matters of domestic policy, which was widely forecast before March, could assume such proportions immediately after the elections as to render France incapable of action in the sphere of foreign policy.

It cannot yet be foreseen how the conflict of emotions will resolve itself. The extremes of possible solutions lie at two exactly opposite poles; they signify either a development towards evil, i.e., estrangement, which might grow into a clash, or towards good, i.e., the permanent settlement of a century of antagonisms. Against the first possibility is the fact that the French people are averse to war, if only because they feel that he for whom things are going well has the more to

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<sup>5</sup> The first ballot of the French parliamentary elections was scheduled for Apr. 26, the second for May 3.

lose. Just as it is quite certain they would bring their entire strength into play as soon as they considered war necessary, so it is equally certain that, just now at any rate, they do not think the moment has come. Against the latter possibility is the profound mistrust of Germany, which has been so greatly increased by the Rhineland action that it may justifiably be doubted whether it can be overcome at all in the foreseeable future.

It is therefore more likely that France will for the time being continue to pursue her policy of semi-solutions and that the tense atmosphere will continue. The endeavour to strengthen France's position through military preparations and the extension of her military alliances will continue with all the more rigour.

FORSTER

### No. 274

6710/E509150-53

#### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

1865

ROME, April 9, 1936.

Received April 14.

II R 1084.

Subject: Alleged attempts of France and Russia to induce Italy to adopt an anti-German policy.

Enclosed I have the honour of submitting a copy of a memorandum by a reliable confidant reporting on the attempts supposedly made recently by France and Russia to induce Italy to adopt an anti-German policy.

HASSELL

[Enclosure]

ROME, April 8, 1936.

#### MEMORANDUM

Recently France and Russia have made three attempts to draw Italy into their anti-German game. All three attempts met with no success.

(I) The first attempt was made by Chambrun<sup>1</sup> before he left for the French Ambassadors' Conference in Paris.<sup>2</sup> He proposed the conclusion of a provisional anti-German agreement between France and Italy. Italy and France were jointly to describe the German reply of March 31<sup>3</sup> as negative. The German refusal was to be used to construct a legal basis, which would have made it possible to impose a

<sup>1</sup> Louis-Charles, Comte de Chambrun, French Ambassador in Italy.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 266, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242.



series of economic and financial sanctions on Germany. After the conclusion of this provisional agreement between Rome and Paris, France would have approached London about removing sanctions [against Italy] and would have informed London at the same time that, should Britain oppose this proposal, France for her part would in any case declare the sanctions void.

This *démarche* by Chambrun did not achieve the success in Rome which France expected; the reply which Mussolini caused him to be given was negative.

It was stated in the Palazzo Chigi that there could be no question of Italy's accepting the French proposal, since the Italian Government had some weeks ago given Berlin assurances to the effect that they would take no action against Germany in the event of a German reaction to the Franco-Russian Pact; moreover, it was quite impossible to take the French proposal seriously since, after all, France could not divorce herself from British policy.

(II) After repeated endeavours, the Russian Ambassador here<sup>4</sup> succeeded in gaining an audience with Mussolini on April 6. At it the Russian Ambassador proposed an Italo-Russo-French agreement against Germany, on the grounds that the policy of the German Government constituted a danger to all, and, indeed, more so to Austria than to Russia. Mussolini replied in the negative to this proposal too.

(III) The French Foreign Minister proposed to Cerruti<sup>5</sup> that Italy for her part too should send France and Belgium the "letter of guarantee" of the Locarno Treaty guarantors.<sup>6</sup> In return, France would raise the sanctions [against Italy]. Mussolini rejected this proposal, too.

In connection with the above, it was stated in the Palazzo Chigi that Italy's policy was obviously moving towards a withdrawal from any obligation *against* Germany and this with the intention and object of leaving open the possibility that Germany might in due course join the Italo-Austrian-Hungarian group which was formed during the recent Three Power discussions in Rome.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Boris E. Stein.

<sup>5</sup> Vittorio Cerruti, Italian Ambassador in France.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., the letter of guarantee provided for under the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor], v. N[eurath]." (ii) "The Führer is informed. L[ammers], Apr. 22." Filed with the document here printed are two minutes (6710/E509154-55) which read: (a) "To Senior Counsellor v. Kamphoevener: This looks very much like a manœuvre [*Stimmungsmache*] (due to bad conscience). The report should consequently not be circulated? Or with an appropriate addition toning it down? W. Schmiedlen, Apr. 17." (b) "H[err] v. Schmiedlen: Recommend circulation, with a reference to the dubious attitude of Grandi and Cerruti. K[amphoevener], Apr. 18." The document here printed was repeated for information to the Missions in London, Moscow, Paris, Warsaw and Brussels on Apr. 20 (6710/E509157-58), with the comment, "In evaluating the assertions made in the memorandum, the attitude of the Italian Ambassadors in London and Paris during the recent events should meanwhile be borne constantly in mind."



## No. 275

7806/E566374-76

*The Military and Air Attaché in France to the Reich Air Ministry  
and the Foreign Ministry*

PARIS, April 9, 1936.

Enclosure 3 to L-Report No. 11/36<sup>1</sup>

II M 1169 g.

Subject: Situation.

During the course of this week the question of the "fortifications in the Rhineland"—people here are thinking in terms of a German Maginot Line—has become the crucial point of the German-French problem, and is likely, in the last resort, to be the crux of all further negotiations and actions. The reasons for this are clear. According to opinion here, France's position as a European Great Power will be jeopardized if France is separated from Eastern Europe by a bulwark of this kind—in much the same way as Spain has for centuries been cut off by the Pyrenees. She will then no longer be able to hasten to the aid of her Eastern satellites, should these, as is assumed, sooner or later fall victims to Germany's hunger for space or should they be attacked by us on account of the Greater Germany concept [*grossdeutsche Idee*]; for it is firmly believed that such intentions can be deduced from the German Peace Plan,<sup>2</sup> which is being called the "*pax germanica*". If, however, her Eastern allies can no longer count on French help, then the equally unpalatable danger becomes obvious that they will dissociate themselves politically from France and tend towards a new combination. France's refusal or her willingness to come to an understanding with Germany may well depend primarily on the solution of this crucial problem. France's militarily passive conduct in the face of our action of March 7 raises the question of whether a similar military passivity is also to be expected in respect of the fresh vital question now under discussion—"fortifications in the Rhineland or not?" As things are at present, the broad masses appear, now as before, to be opposed to a military conflict. The people admittedly do not yet see the above described effect on France's position as a Great Power in Europe, or perhaps do not wish to see it, as the broad masses are peace-loving and as, above all, they want to be left in peace, the more so because the first signs of an economic improvement are becoming noticeable. This attitude of the broad masses also assumes significance for the present Government and for the politicians of the Quai D'Orsay in view of the coming elections. These facts will be taken into consideration, and it may

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (M321/M013341); this report was received in the Foreign Ministry on Apr. 12.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 242.

therefore be assumed that, for the immediate future, that is, until about the middle of May, the emergence of France from her militarily passive attitude is not to be expected. Independently of this, the state of readiness of the army is being maintained by the General Staff—there are no indications of any relaxation in this respect—in order to be prepared for any eventuality.

KÜHLENTHAL

## No. 276

9172/E645385-86

*Minister of Economics Schacht to Foreign Minister Neurath*

II 15003/36

BERLIN, April 9, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON NEURATH: The amended version of the preliminary agreement [*Punktation*] for a provisional settlement of the Corridor question<sup>1</sup> was transmitted to me for my comments by telephone at 11:30 a.m. on April 7. I studied this preliminary agreement forthwith and shortly before noon sent to ask for certain information as to its interpretation from Geheimrat Roediger, and at the same time caused him to be informed that the views of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics would be promptly communicated by telephone. Ministerialrat Forkel<sup>2</sup> telephoned Geheimrat Roediger at 1:22 p.m. and informed him, giving reasons, that I was unable to agree to the preliminary agreement under any circumstances.<sup>3</sup> Nevertheless, the preliminary agreement was signed on April 7 without waiting for my views. You will understand that I must protest most emphatically against this manner of treating so grave a question.

The question of unfreezing Polish capital claims in Germany has nothing to do with the question of unfreezing Polish freight claims arising from the Corridor traffic. It is only the latter question which is the subject of the negotiations now being or yet to be conducted with Poland. In a letter to Geheimrat Roediger of April 3, 1936,<sup>4</sup> Herr Herbert Göring had already expressed my strongest possible opposition to the Polish attempt to include in the preliminary agreement the question of Polish capital claims in Germany, which had nothing to do with the negotiations. The Polish demand is intolerable from the point of view of German foreign exchange policy, since to offset capital claims against capital claims between Germany and another country which has itself no foreign exchange control must have the

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 264, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Of the Reich Ministry of Economics.

<sup>3</sup> In a letter to Moltke of Apr. 8 (9172/E645380-81) Roediger stated that he had told Forkel that the objections came too late.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (9172/E645373-74).

most deleterious consequences for Germany's relations with other countries having capital claims upon her. The Polish attempt to compel Germany to provide exceptional treatment in this question is the more outrageous in that, in the case of the Polish capital claims compared, for instance, with those of Switzerland, Holland, Britain or America, the sums concerned are extremely small. In the main the Polish capital claims against Germany involve the sums derived from liquidations through sales of house property bought up cheaply in Germany by Polish Jews during the inflation period. I am not in a position to depart from the principles of German foreign exchange control to satisfy these Polish-Jewish claims and thus permit Germany to be placed in an intolerable position in relation to those countries having major capital claims on her.

In these circumstances, I regretfully find myself compelled to point out already at this stage that I can only permit negotiations on the payment of Corridor arrears subject to the directive that there is to be no discussion of any sort of the question of settling Polish capital claims in Germany.<sup>5</sup>

Heil Hitler!

Yours, etc.

DR. HJALMAR SCHACHT

<sup>5</sup> The document here printed was forwarded by Senior Counsellor Lieres to Moltke under cover of a letter of Apr. 15 (9172/E645384) which reads: "I enclose a copy of a communication, received here after the holidays [Easter Sunday was on Apr. 12], from Herr Schacht to Herr v. Neurath, for whom it will be transmitted today to Leinfelden. The communication probably crossed with our express letter to the Ministry of Economics of Apr. 8, in which we for our part already explained the situation." Neither the express letter of Apr. 8 nor any reply to the document here printed has been found.

## No. 277

8803/E613605

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 63 of April 10

ANKARA, April 10, 1936—11:30 p.m.

Received April 11—5:45 p.m.

[III O 1771.]<sup>1</sup>

Numan has informed me in confidence that Turkey will tomorrow communicate to the Powers signatories of the Dardanelles Convention<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Journal. The working copies of documents on the Montreux Conference were filed under the reference Schiffahrt 3, the files of which are not held. The relevant documents have been traced in the naval and Mission files.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Convention relating to the Régime of the Straits, signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923, by the representatives of Britain, France, Italy, Japan, Bulgaria, Greece, Rumania, Russia and Turkey. For the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xxviii, pp. 115-137.

a Note<sup>3</sup> of some length in which she explains that the guarantee provided for in Article 18 has, in consequence of the changed political situation, become to be annulled [*sic*]<sup>4</sup> and ineffective and that, in practice, it no longer protects Turkish territory against external danger. She therefore informs the Signatory Powers that she is prepared to negotiate about the conclusion of a new régime for the Straits which would safeguard the inviolability of Turkish territory whilst [treating] commercial navigation in the most liberal spirit. The Note will also be communicated in Berlin tomorrow.<sup>5</sup>

KELLER

<sup>3</sup> For the text of this Note as communicated on Apr. 10 to the representatives in Ankara of the Signatories to the Lausanne Convention and Yugoslavia and for information to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, May 1936, pp. 504-505.

<sup>4</sup> These three words are queried in the original as doubtful in transmission.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "Communicated today, *à titre d'information*, by the Turkish Ambassador. D[ieckhoff], Apr. 11."

## No. 278

3925/E051629-30

*Ambassador Moltke to Senior Counsellor Roediger*

WARSAW, April 10, 1936.

DEAR HERR ROEDIGER: Yesterday I had a conversation of some length with M. Lipski and I would like to inform you of the following points from it:

(1) Minister President Göring has promised M. Lipski, in the name of the Reich Chancellor, that before that part of the German Peace Plan<sup>1</sup> which relates to the East is set in train, the subject will be discussed with the Polish Government.

(2) They have been told, apparently via the same channel, that the extension of the ten-year period of the German-Polish Non-Aggression Treaty<sup>2</sup> to twenty-five years is taken for granted.

(3) Minister President Kościółkowski has expressed great concern to M. Lipski about the question of the N.S.D.A.B.<sup>3</sup> It is said to have emerged quite indisputably from nineteen statements by persons held in custody for interrogation that the action was conducted not only in agreement with "Party Offices", but that allegedly it was even directed by these offices. Kościółkowski has instructed M. Lipski to

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 242.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>3</sup> *Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiter-Bewegung*, an organization with headquarters at Katowice, various members of which were arrested by Polish police from the middle of February onwards and accused of being members of a secret organization whose aim was to detach, by force if necessary, Polish Upper Silesia from Poland and assure its reintegration into Germany. Relevant documents have been filmed on Serials 9209 and M322.



discuss the matter with General Göring with a view to inducing him, through some demonstrative gesture, to dissociate himself from the action. Naturally I pointed out that it was quite impossible for Party Offices to have been playing a leading part. At the same time I expressed my astonishment that a member of the [Polish] Foreign Ministry, whose name I did not wish to give, had had the impudence to say to me, in connection with the N.S.D.A.B., that "the whole revisionist activity at present appeared to be concentrated on Upper Silesia". Lipski understood at once to what I was referring and replied that this should not be taken too tragically; a good many things had happened together at that time—the transit payments, the breakdown of the economic agreement,<sup>4</sup> the speech by Schacht<sup>5</sup> and finally the N.S.D.A.B., so it was not surprising that the head of a department should become somewhat excitable in view of such an accumulation of incidents.

(4) In the Pless<sup>6</sup> matter, M. Lipski said that, as far as he could see, the only suitable basis for settling the matter was by the method proposed by Bennett.<sup>7</sup> I drew his attention to the negotiations being conducted by the Prince's sons and to the fact that Count Alexander Hochberg<sup>8</sup> had spent two days here in Warsaw during the last week. M. Lipski said that these were purely individual efforts which, as far as he knew, were not supported by any Polish department.

With cordial greetings and

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.

(AMBASSADOR)<sup>9</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For the economic agreement of Nov. 4, 1935, and other agreements signed that day see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 390 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to Schacht's speech at Beuthen in Upper Silesia on Jan. 28, 1936; in a memorandum of Jan. 30 (147/78395) Bülow recorded that Lipski had complained about certain phrases in this speech.

<sup>6</sup> The Prince of Pless owned considerable properties and concerns in Polish Upper Silesia. Documents on his affairs and his disputes with the Polish Government have been filmed on Serials 9186, K234 and M323. See also vol. III of this Series, document No. 496, and League of Nations: *Official Journal*, February 1935, pp. 145–149.

<sup>7</sup> Sir Albert Bennett, a London financier, acted for the Polish Government in negotiations on the Pless property (see footnote 6 above).

<sup>8</sup> Second son of the Prince of Pless.

<sup>9</sup> The signature is lacking on this copy.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On April 10, conversations were held in Geneva by representatives of the Locarno Powers other than Germany. In the communiqué issued after this meeting and published in the press on April 11 (for the text of which see *Documents on International Affairs 1936* (London, 1937), pp. 210–211), it was announced that it had been agreed *inter alia* that the British Government should get in touch with the German Government in order to obtain elucidation on a certain number of points contained in the German Memorandum of March 31, notably those set out in the French Memorandum of April 8, and also

that the conversations between the General Staffs were to begin on April 15. A declaration made by Aloisi at the start of the conversations was also issued for publication by the Italian delegation (for the text see *ibid.*, p. 211.)]

## No. 279

6710/E509020-22

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 27 of April 11

GENEVA, April 11, 1936—6:30 p.m.

Received April 11—8:20 p.m.

II R 1050.

The conversations among the Locarno Powers<sup>1</sup> began yesterday afternoon and lasted, with a short pause, until nearly midnight. The English text of the communiqué issued on the conversations has already been sent to you yesterday evening in telegram No. 28.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the course that the conversations, which were held in the office of the Secretary General of the League of Nations, in the new League of Nations building, behind hermetically sealed doors, took, the strictest silence is being maintained. All those who took part left Geneva immediately after the conclusion of the negotiations. In these circumstances full and reliable information on the very exhaustive discussions is not to be had here at the moment. On the basis of a brief conversation with Aloisi, before and after the Locarno Powers' conversations, some strictly confidential information from the British and Italian Delegations, and conversations with press representatives, the following, provisional, and naturally incomplete, picture emerges.

The conversations, which lasted several hours, fell into three parts, with a short pause between each. During the first phase there was a fundamental argument between Flandin and Eden, which in places revealed very strong differences of opinion and which led to no agreement. During it Flandin is said to have made the following demands:

(1) By reason of the unsatisfactory reply so far given by Germany to the London resolutions, the period for attempts at conciliation should be regarded as at an end.

(2) A further *démarche* should be made by the Locarno Powers in Berlin on the fortifications question.

(3) Should this step not meet with the desired success, the obligation of the Locarno Powers to take sanctions measures in accordance with the London Agreements<sup>3</sup> should come into effect. But in this case

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> Of Apr. 10; not printed (6710/E508994-96).

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Locarno Powers' proposals of Mar. 19; see Editors' Note, p. 208.

France undertook already at this stage to proceed to economic sanctions, which would take the form of an embargo on iron exports to Germany, and she required of Britain the cancellation of commercial credits to Germany. France reserved further measures. Eden, on the other hand, is said to have stated that the British Government did not yet regard the period for attempts at conciliation as ended. Therefore, at present, the sanctions question simply did not arise. A very keen debate between the British and French led to no sort of agreement, either in principle on the problems created for the Locarno Powers by Germany's attitude in the Rhineland zone, or on the procedure to be adopted in dealing with individual questions. The important point here seems to be that it cannot clearly be gathered from the debate what attitude Britain will adopt in the sanctions question, always provided that she considers that a case for sanctions exists. No sort of agreement could be reached either on the question of whether the Council or only the Locarno Powers were the appropriate authority for the further handling of the Rhineland question. Only on one point was there agreement, namely, that the German and French Peace Plans<sup>4</sup> must be studied.

In the second phase van Zeeland submitted a draft of a nine-point report, the contents of which were ultimately approved and which formed the basis of the subsequent communiqué.

The third phase was taken up by a violent battle on the phrasing of the communiqué, during which the British side apparently put through several alterations to its form.

In his capacity as *rapporteur*, van Zeeland took little part in the debate. Aloisi emphasized to me that he had taken part in the discussion only in the form of the declaration transmitted in telegram No. 29,<sup>5</sup> and he drew special attention to the fact that Italy did not support the present resolutions of the Locarno Powers, just as she had not supported the previous ones, but had expressly reserved her attitude. He had, he said, once more specifically stated this at the end of the debate. On the basis of my conversation with Aloisi and Rocco,<sup>6</sup> I have the impression that the sharp and completely reserved tone of yesterday's Italian declaration<sup>5</sup> on the Locarno conversations had been substantially influenced by the Italian disappointment and concern over both the British and the French attitudes in the Abyssinian question. Apart from the doubtful outcome of the Locarno Powers' conversations yesterday, which was apparent from the official communiqué, I have gained the impression, from my conversations with British and Italian eyewitnesses of the debate, in spite of their

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 242 and Editors' Note, p. 402, respectively.

<sup>5</sup> Of Apr. 11, not printed (6710/E509025-26); this transmitted a French text of the declaration made by Aloisi at the opening meeting (see Editors' Note, p. 432, and Aloisi: *Journal* (Paris, 1957), pp. 370-371).

<sup>6</sup> Guido Rocco, a member of the permanent Italian Delegation to the League Council and Assembly.



extreme reticence, that the course of these conversations has given rise to great uneasiness and a markedly grave mood among the participants. My Italian interlocutors seemed also to regard the outcome of the conversations as unfavourable to Germany, basing their opinion not on the communiqué alone, but obviously also, above all, on the conversations underlying it. My English interlocutor, Strang,<sup>7</sup> avoided making any statement or expressing any opinion whatsoever.

KRAUEL

<sup>7</sup> William Strang, Counsellor and Adviser on League of Nations Affairs in the Foreign Office, had accompanied Eden to Geneva.

## No. 280

6710/E509133-39

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 71 of April 14

LONDON, April 14, 1936.

Received April 15—8:40 a.m.

II R 1083.

Wigram, who, together with Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff,<sup>1</sup> lunched with me today, told us the following about the discussions in Geneva<sup>2</sup> and the way the Locarno problem would probably be treated in future:

In Geneva, he said, the British Government had been requested to put to Germany certain questions designed to clear up certain points in the German peace proposals which were said to be unclear. The form and content of these questions was to be left to the British Government and no agreements of any sort had been made on this in Geneva, but they would presumably cover much the same ground as the questions which had already been raised in the French Locarno Memorandum<sup>3</sup> and which, in the opinion of the British Government too, required clarification. The questions would cover both the interim period and the general peace proposals, but would, as far as the former was concerned, presumably be of a comparatively unessential nature. Wigram said that one of the questions would be whether Germany would also be prepared to refrain from increasing stocks of war material in the Rhineland during the period of negotiation. On the other hand, we gathered from what he said that the question of fortifications would not be made the subject of enquiry. With regard to questions on the general German peace proposals, Wigram described as the cardinal point the

<sup>1</sup> Dieckhoff was in London to attend the funeral ceremonies for Ambassador Hoesch, who had died on Apr. 10.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432 and document No. 279.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.



relationship between the bilateral non-aggression pacts offered by Germany and the system of collective security.

In Wigram's own opinion, it was not to be expected, in view of Eden's renewed absence in Geneva and the need thoroughly to examine the whole problem, that the British Government would approach the Reich Government in the above sense before the end of next week. Wigram described this delay as, indeed, desirable. With regard to the German reply, he thought that what would be most useful would be if this were to be received on about May 4 or 5, immediately after the second ballot in the French elections,<sup>4</sup> but in any case before May 10 or 11, so that the British Government would be in possession of the German reply before the Council of the League of Nations met again.<sup>5</sup> I request that Wigram's statements be treated as highly confidential, as he called on me without the Foreign Office's knowledge.

BISMARCK

<sup>4</sup> The second ballot was scheduled for May 3, the first for Apr. 26.

<sup>5</sup> The Ninety-Second Session of the League Council was due to open on May 11.

## No. 281

6680/H096417

*The Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht  
to the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, W.35, April 15, 1936.

W.Stb. No. 3246/36 geheim

With reference to our communication of March 25, 1936 (W.Stb. No. 2688/36 geheim),<sup>1</sup> I enclose copies of my telegram to Marshal Chiang Kai-shek<sup>2</sup> and his reply to me.<sup>3</sup>

On the basis of this reply, the agreement for the exchange of goods and the credit agreement were concluded on Thursday April 9, 1936,<sup>4</sup> with the approval of the President of the Reichsbank and the Reich Minister of Finance. Similarly, the German State-owned Company "Hapro" has been founded to carry out the exchange of goods between Germany and China. The direction of its affairs lies with the Chief of the Economic Defence Staff of the Reich.

Herr Klein has withdrawn from the Company and will leave for China again at the beginning of May to take over the organization of the supply of goods in China. Before he leaves he will come to the Foreign Ministry and report on future plans.

Heil Hitler!

By order:

THOMAS

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 217.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 206.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 254.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 270.

## No. 282

6710/E509182-85

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

1937

ROME, April 16, 1936.

Received April 18.

II R 1124.

Subject: Information on a conversation between the Russian Ambassador here, Stein, and Mussolini.

With reference to my report [No.] 1865 of April 9.<sup>1</sup>

Enclosed I have the honour to submit a copy of a further memorandum by the confidant mentioned in the above report, in which further details are given of the conversation between the Russian Ambassador here, Stein, and Mussolini on April 6.

HASSELL

[Enclosure]

ROME, April 15, 1936.

## MEMORANDUM

In the conversation between the Russian Ambassador here, Stein, and Mussolini on April 6, the former gave an *exposé* lasting three-quarters of an hour of the international situation, which he said had become untenable as a result of Hitler's policy, and must inevitably lead sooner or later to a war. The reoccupation of the Rhineland would immediately be supplemented and completed by the refortification of this territory. Germany wished thus to impede France from rendering military assistance to her allies in the event of complications in the East or South East. Hitler's first blow would not be directed at Russia, who was situated at too great a distance from Germany and, moreover, was strongly armed for war. In the Russian view, the next German initiative would be more likely to be directed against either Memel, Austria or Czechoslovakia. In no circumstances, however, would Hitler's political programme end with the reoccupation and refortification of the Rhineland. Its development against the East or South East must be regarded as quite certain and that in the near future. The fate of Austria was thereby sealed already now. This was of primary interest to Italy. It was therefore urgently necessary that a preventive agreement against Germany should be reached in good time between Italy, Russia and France, so that events should not take them by surprise. On the basis of this agreement, France and Russia would

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 274.

pursue a common policy in Geneva, which would be such that a compromise solution of the Abyssinian question would be demanded by both States, whilst Italy would be protected from any intensification, and, if possible, also from any continuation of sanctions.

Mussolini replied that the whole *exposé* of the Russian Ambassador related to future developments which were, for Europe, extremely uncertain, since at present the situation was changing from day to day. Italy, he said, could only consider matters in relation to the present. Both France and Russia were at the moment adopting an anti-Italian attitude; they were taking part in sanctions against Italy and had even, both at Geneva and outside Geneva, gone so far as to assume obligations against Italy, including some of a military nature. Germany, on the other hand, was one of those States which had not taken part in sanctions against Italy. Italy could therefore in no circumstances assume any obligations against Germany, in other words against a State which had refused to take part in sanctions.

Mussolini further pointed out that, if France and Russia proceeded further with the intensification of sanctions or even with their continuation, Italy would enter into clear and definite obligations with Germany against France and Russia as well.

The Russian Ambassador was very deeply impressed by this reply, so much so, indeed, that speaking personally he admitted that Italy's case was good, and he furthermore gave an assurance that he would do his utmost to convince Moscow that a revision of the sanctions policy was essential and that any intensification should in no circumstances be permitted.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath], Apr. 21." (2) "The Führer is informed. L[ammers], Apr. 22."

## No. 283

6710/E509194

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

1938

ROME, April 16, 1936.

Received April 18.

II R 1126.

Subject: Aloisi's conversations<sup>1</sup> in Geneva with Flandin and Paul-Boncour.

I hear from a reliable source that at the conversations which took place in Geneva last week between Flandin and [Paul-] Boncour on the

<sup>1</sup> For Aloisi's account of these conversations of Apr. 9, 10 and 11 see Aloisi: *Journal* (Paris, 1957), pp. 369-371.

one hand, and Aloisi on the other, the French Ministers attempted to obtain from Aloisi a statement on Italy's attitude on the following points:

1) Is Italy prepared to send the "letter of guarantee"<sup>2</sup> from the guarantors of the Locarno Treaty to France and Belgium? (See Section III of the enclosure to report 1865 of April 9.)<sup>3</sup>

2) Is Italy prepared to demand of Germany that the Rhineland Zone should not be fortified?

3) In the event of a German refusal, is Italy prepared to take part in the imposition of sanctions on Germany, which initially would be of an economic and financial character?

4) Is Italy prepared to extend the Locarno Pact to the Mediterranean?

Aloisi is said to have expressed no views on these points and to have confined himself to saying that he would report on the subject to his Government.

Mussolini is then said to have issued instructions to the Palazzo Chigi that no answer was to be given to any of these questions.<sup>4</sup>

HASELL

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 274.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Counsellor Schmieden's handwriting on another copy (6710/E509193): "So the decision remains open."

## No. 284

9144/E643061-74

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 1 allg.

PRAGUE, April 16, 1936.

Received April 20.

II Ts. 828.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Czechoslovakia in the present European crisis.

*The Czechs are conscious of the precariousness of their State's existence by reason of its internal composition and because of neighbouring States on their frontiers.*

The present European crisis with its dangers and its possibilities for fresh developments has brought home once more to the Czech people the precariousness of their continued existence as a State. For here every domestic disturbance or threat from without imperils the very foundations of their State's existence; the frame of mind of the people thus resembles that of the inhabitants of a house who fear, on observing signs of an earthquake, that roof and walls may come tumbling



about their ears. Here is a State which was a completely new creation after the war; a State whose administration has been so little successful and so little honest that even many of the Czechs themselves doubt the possibility of its survival; a State in which, out of a population of nearly 15 million, the ruling race [*Staatsvolk*] number little more than 6 million whilst the other elements of the population feel themselves to be deprived of their rights and oppressed. The scene abroad corresponds to that at home. Along the disproportionately long frontiers live neighbours who are feared: to the West the Germans, to the North the Germans and Poles, to the South the Hungarians and the Austrians, of which last it cannot be expected that, in case of emergency, they would be able to stand up to the Germans or the Hungarians; only at a distance of 700 km. from Prague, at its not easily accessible eastern tip, does the country border on friendly Rumania.

*The sense of uncertainty has increased still further amongst the Czechs as a result of the repercussions of the world economic crisis and the National Revolution in Germany. The successes of the National Socialist Government hitherto are regarded as disasters for Czechoslovakia.*

Not only is the situation in itself already so precarious that, according to a saying by the present President of the Republic, fifty years of undisturbed possession would be necessary for the new State to consolidate itself, but both internal and external dangers have grown more menacing in recent years as a result of the repercussions of the world economic crisis and of the National Revolution in Germany. When, after the collapse of the Dual Monarchy, their fondest dreams had been fulfilled and they had been able to seize power themselves, the Czechs literally plundered the country, establishing themselves in all influential positions, not only out of rapacity and selfishness, but, as much and more so, in order to wrest from the German minority, which numbered 3½ million, that material and cultural ascendancy which, under Austrian rule, the latter had won for themselves in the course of centuries. The world economic crisis and the advent of an increasingly severe struggle for any chance of earnings, however small (a struggle in which the influence of the State is always exerted in favour of the Czechs and against the Germans) have hastened the process of decay of the Sudeten German industry, designed as it was on a scale to suit the economic region of the old Empire, and have turned the impoverishment of the Germans into the most dire distress, and their discontent into hatred; of a total of 800,000 unemployed, 500,000 belong to the German minority. Every aspect of our National Socialism is to the Czechs distasteful, frightening and hateful—the Führer-principle as in opposition to traditional democratic forms, the racial principle, the revival of national feeling in Germany, the emphasis on the unity of the whole German community with the spread of this idea across the frontier.

Everything that has happened since, our withdrawal from the League of Nations, the German-Polish *détente*, the contagion of the National Socialist idea in Austria, the restoration of our military sovereignty and now the restoration of unrestricted sovereignty on the Rhine, that is to say the increase in German power and influence, all are regarded here as disastrous for Czechoslovakia. As the German threat increased, so did the threat from Poland and Hungary steadily increase too, on account of the good political relations between them and the Reich. The denunciation of the military restrictions by Austria and the fear that Hungary and Bulgaria might take the same step, are attributed to Germany's example and are therefore regarded as indirect consequences of the policy of the Third Reich.

*The threefold German threat: Attack from without, Anschluss, S.d.P. [Sudeten German Party].*

The immediate dangers which, in the Czechoslovak view, threaten this country from Germany are threefold: the danger of an attack from without, the *Anschluss* of Austria to Germany which would encircle this country politically, economically and culturally, and the fear that the S.d.P. [Sudeten German Party], which comprises 70 per cent of the German minority and is also a consequence of National Socialism, could be used as a lever to weaken or even burst asunder the fabric of the State from within. What would be the consequences if the other minorities in this country, the Slovaks, the Magyars, the Poles and the Ruthenes, were, without regard to religious or economic interests, also to join together in racial [*völkisch*] parties and make common cause against the Czechs?

*Relations with Germany are the crucial factor in any Czech policy. Fear of being culturally absorbed if relations with the German community are good. Anti-German post-war policy based on this fear and on the desire to remain amongst the victors.*

The question thus becomes ever more urgent as to whether the means and methods employed hitherto will continue to be adequate to achieve the Czechs' political aim of holding their own, i.e., of safeguarding Czech rule and Czech culture within the territory of the present State. The crucial factor in any Czech policy is the relationship with the German people, that is to say, nowadays, with the Reich. The Czechs have always regarded themselves as an "island in the German sea". Experience has taught them that they can only hold their own if they are either living on good terms with the Germans or, with powerful and reliable foreign aid, defending themselves against the German community. The former was the path chosen by the Czech people towards the end of the ninth century and they continued in this path for more than 1,000 years, constantly quarrelling with the Germans and yet

always protected by them through all the vicissitudes of Western history. But to be at peace with the German community concealed a deadly peril, that of assimilation by an alien, higher, culture; thus the purpose of the revolution against Austrian rule and the significance of the foundation of the new State lay not least in rebellion against the supremacy of German culture. It is necessary to maintain tense, even hostile relations with the German community in order not to be overpowered by it, and in order to preserve the racial [*völkisch*] identity of the Czechs which in the course of history has so often appeared to be almost lost and has yet been recovered again and again with remarkable tenacity. So, for this reason alone, and quite apart from the memory of the help which the revolutionaries received from the Allies during the World War, and apart from the endeavour to remain on the more powerful side, it is understandable that post-war Czechoslovak policy should have been consistently anti-German. Membership of the League of Nations, where Beneš could play his part among the great ones of Europe, the alliance with France and membership of the Little Entente, sufficed against Germany and Hungary, guaranteed the Czechs the survival of the State and simultaneously their own power within the State, militated in cultural respects against German influence (which in the main remained restricted to the profitable sphere of trade relations), and made it possible to prevent the dreaded *Anschluss* and to force the German minority inside Czechoslovakia to the wall, politically and economically. When Germany reassumed her military sovereignty, this [Czech] policy was continued and strengthened by the conclusion of the Russian Pact, following suit on the Russo-French alliance. Parallel with this policy ran the efforts to ease the Czech position by attempting *rapprochements* with Poland, Hungary and, above all, with Austria. These attempts can now be regarded as having largely failed.

*Doubts as to whether, after the reoccupation of the Rhineland, inclining towards French policy will in future suffice to protect Czechoslovakia. Whether and to what extent this policy can be changed will depend entirely on M. Beneš.*

The entry of the German troops into the Rhineland has clarified the situation and made it plain that the dangers of the policy pursued by the Czechoslovaks hitherto are beginning to outweigh the expected advantages and above all that this political orientation towards Paris now no longer suffices to guarantee that national survival for which the Czechs are striving. It is realized here that, in case of war, Czechoslovakia would be the first target for attack but that it can now no longer be hoped that the French, advancing with lightning speed across the Rhine as they did in 1805, could provide rapid relief. Through the occupation of the Rhineland the French have now receded as far away as



the Russians, whose value as allies is, moreover, untried and uncertain. But if victory is not quick, certain and overwhelming, this motley State will not be able to survive the disruptive test of a warlike conflict. And should a Franco-German *détente* become conceivable, then the Czechs must fear that the French nation's interest in Czechoslovakia might diminish and Germany's power and her attraction for Austria and the Sudeten German community increase. However hostile the Czech people may, in general, be to Germany, however much they may desire to see Germany's rise obstructed, they are nevertheless too experienced politically and fear has made them too clear-sighted to see things other than as they are. What solution will be sought, however, in order, in the changed circumstances, to safeguard Czechoslovakia and Czech predominance within it, will depend solely upon how M. Beneš assesses the situation and the possibilities it affords. One conclusion can be drawn straight away from the political past of this man. That is, that if the present policy should no longer prove sufficient and likewise if it cannot be carried to the point of general collective security with automatic assistance pacts, then he will change his policy to the line of a *rapprochement* with Germany only at such time, and in so far, as this appears to be absolutely unavoidable. On the other hand, he is certainly not the man to run his head against a brick wall.

*Beneš is consolidating his position of strength, letting his rival Hodža trip himself up by his own mistakes, and ensuring for himself decisive influence over foreign policy, press and army.*

Anyone who supposed that the direct influence which Beneš exerts on the policy of this country would diminish with his election last December as President of the State, and that political trends and views other than his own might now come to the fore, will have very quickly learned better. As a possible rival M. Hodža appeared foremost on the scene. In order to exclude opposition from Hodža at the Presidential elections Beneš had reconciled their old differences and contented M. Hodža with the posts of Minister President and Foreign Minister. Hodža at once pranced off on his hobby-horse, the Danubian plan, thus making his name resound all through Europe and particularly in the Parisian press. Beneš gave him his head and it was not long before Hodža was forced to admit that he had acquired no laurels in the field of foreign affairs. He was glad to give up the Foreign Ministry and the post was then given to M. Krofta, the tool of Beneš'. Hodža was then compelled to turn his attention to home affairs where, as a Slovak, he regarded himself as the right man to conduct negotiations with the Slovak People's Party of Father Hlinka<sup>1</sup> about

<sup>1</sup> Mgr. Andrej Hlinka, Leader of the (Clerical) Slovak People's Party, the largest party in Slovakia, and an advocate of autonomy for Slovakia on the basis of the Pittsburgh agreement of May 1918.



their entering the Government. These negotiations also broke down and it is said that after this *débâcle* his days as Minister President are strictly numbered; this rival counts as finished. In the meanwhile, Beneš has begun to enhance the position of the Presidency to his own advantage. He does not merely influence foreign affairs, he conducts them. In the Hradčín<sup>2</sup> he conducts his chancellery as though it were an actual Ministry of his own; he receives foreign Heads of Missions and negotiates with them. He has cultivated the closest relations with the press and influences them in his own special way; the Czech and German language papers—the latter run by Jews—are allowed and expected to follow the lead of Paris in a noisy chorus; but from time to time there appears an article full of sober clarity and quite different in tone, which makes those who know the press prick up their ears—here is the voice of the Castle. The President's special care has latterly been the Armed Forces. He is at pains to establish contact with the troops by paying personal visits to them in their barracks and supports an increase in the forces and an improvement in their equipment and armament. Admittedly he will no more be able to inspire the troops, divided as they are along lines of different nationalities and allegiance to different political parties, with a spirit of soldierly comradeship, than will the Law for the Defence of the State (which after years of preparation has, on Beneš' instructions, been laid at this critical hour before Parliament<sup>3</sup>), with its dictatorial authorization of unprecedented interference with property and personal and professional freedom, be able to banish the danger inherent in the existence of the oppressed minorities, living in broad belts along the frontiers, who hate this State and long for its destruction.

*Beneš, with his controversial personality, is not popular even in his own country. His sober and rational cast of mind. He is alien to the German mentality.*

Beneš was Foreign Minister for fifteen years. Owing to his frequent appearances in Geneva and his constant travels, he has become one of the best known figures in Europe; his rise from conspirator to Minister, he has himself described in a big book.<sup>4</sup> And yet his personality is the subject of much controversy. In Germany he is regarded as the "Father of Lies". In this country, despite his achievements, he is little liked because his pre-eminence is not easily tolerated. But, in this connection, the rumour that he has enriched himself and has become dependent on foreign countries by participating in commercial ventures,

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<sup>2</sup> The fortified palace of the ancient Kings of Bohemia, which became the official residence of the President of the State.

<sup>3</sup> On March 26, 1936; see also document No. 465 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> *Světová válka a naše revoluce* (Prague, 1927); also published in a German translation: *Der Aufstand der Nationen* (Berlin, 1928).

has done him least harm. He is feared because he is believed to be constantly collecting information about other people in order to get rid of them if they become awkward. Even by those who have worked closely with him he is regarded as an emotionless "thinking machine". Beneš once told me himself that he was said to have no heart, but he thought he had more heart than many of those who spoke thus of him. It was simply that he took pains to look at things dispassionately and to solve difficulties by the application of reason. It is certain that he is a politician to his fingertips, that he is passionately attached to his people and fights for them with equal passion. He is hardly very scrupulous in his choice of methods. Beneš is diffident by nature; his life is very strictly ordered; he is an indefatigable worker with whose pace and endurance his subordinates have difficulty in keeping up. Everything he says bears the stamp of rational sobriety; he likes to lecture and tries to carry conviction to his listeners by a compelling exposition, and to make them see things his way. Amongst his *entourage* he has the reputation of not evading difficult questions or shying away from the discussion of delicate political issues. Nor does he need to, for not only is he familiar with questions of domestic and foreign policy down to the last detail, but he has fitted them firmly into a system and has considered and weighed up in advance every possible development. One of his outstanding characteristics is his caution; he will never take a step without first testing his foothold. Though it is unlikely that he shares what can only be described as the hysterical fear of the German community which is felt by the Czechs, I am none the less inclined to assume that to Beneš, by reason of his upbringing and nature, the German character, particularly as manifested in National Socialism, appears incomprehensible and sinister.

*Beneš is awaiting the outcome of the negotiations between the remaining Locarno Powers. Is he prepared, if French policy does not gain him his ends, to seek another solution?*

In the present discussion about the abrogation of the Locarno Treaty, and about the German and French Peace Plans, Beneš is awaiting the outcome; he is not, however, inactive and is busily engaged behind the scenes, allegedly not always using the customary official channels but very frequently those of direct telephone conversations between the Head of State and foreign statesmen. He can rely upon the French seeking to look after his interests as well as their own, for, important as is the French alliance to Prague, equally important to France's position of hegemony in Europe are Czechoslovakia, the other countries of the Little Entente and the "independence" of Austria. But Beneš is no blindly obedient vassal of France; he has already on previous occasions permitted himself to deviate from the French line, as over the Habsburg question and over the policy of sanctions against Italy.

Were he now to collaborate through thick and thin in the intransigent French policy towards the German proposals and were this policy then to prove unworkable, it might happen that, for the sake of Czechoslovakia's self preservation, he would feel compelled one fine day to seek protection from Germany, that is to say that he would be obliged to run all the risks to which, to the minds of the Czechs, their own culture and own political freedom of action would be exposed in such a relationship. The reception accorded by the British people to the German Peace Plan and the occupation of the Rhineland is bound to have disconcerted him and caused him to doubt whether France would be able to continue to play the same role in Europe as hitherto. This is the only possible explanation of how newspaper articles written by semi-official authors here can be counselling willingness to negotiate with Germany, and how, on the very day that the press announced the publication of the French Peace Plan with an accurate account of its terms, Beneš could be describing bilateral non-aggression pacts as acceptable on the grounds that he was prepared to admit that the position in the East was different from that in the West, and that treaties could only be kept if they represented the interests of both parties. All this looks as though Beneš, in case the ideal solution should not prove feasible, were already cautiously preparing for a different one.

*In the event of a German-French détente, tolerable relations between Czechoslovakia and Germany could only be established if the Sudeten German community were justly treated. International supervision would be the most effective aid for the German minority.*

What this other solution might be can only be conjectured. Beneš was at pains to point out, on a previous occasion,<sup>5</sup> that he had always pursued a policy, not of dependence [*Abhängigkeit*] on France but of inclining towards [*Anlehnung*] the Western Powers, that is, France and Britain, within the framework of the League of Nations. It is axiomatic that Britain, too, must be induced to interest herself in the maintenance of Czechoslovakia in the interests of the League of Nations and of European peace. A well-informed politician here, however, recently told me that the British neither knew where Czechoslovakia was and nor did they wish to know, and that a certain amount of spadework had had to be done to extract Neville Chamberlain's statement in the House of Commons<sup>6</sup> that Britain was committed by Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations to hasten to the aid of Czechoslovakia in the event of an unprovoked attack. It was pointed out in the German memorandum of March 7<sup>7</sup> that Germany's willingness to

<sup>5</sup> Evidently a reference to the conversation on Feb. 21, for Eisenlohr's report on which see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 580.

<sup>6</sup> See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 310, col. 1541.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.



return to the League of Nations was a recognition of the principle of collective security within this framework. Beneš would thus, if other wishful thoughts and dreams of pacts failed to mature, be able to remain faithful to his previous policy in so far as it is a League of Nations policy. Should a *détente* between Germany and France once come to pass and should the Czechoslovak-French alliance thereby gradually lose its "moral", anti-German, value, as it has already lost some of its military significance through the occupation of the Rhineland, then Czechoslovakia would have to base her security on Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations (whilst at the same time paying special regard to Britain), and on a new treaty relationship, whatever form this might take, with Germany, whilst endeavouring to maintain her present alliances despite their diminished value. But Beneš realizes that such a policy, which would ensure the survival of his State and leave him with considerable freedom of action, could only hope to succeed if there were a real *détente* with Germany who is so much feared whilst his country's relations with the German Reich could always be re-poisoned and so endangered anew by oppression of the Sudeten Germans. Thus, such a policy would only be workable if the Czechoslovak Government seriously endeavoured to satisfy the Sudeten Germans by treating them justly. One can conceive of Beneš bringing himself to accept such a solution if he were to see no other way out and once he had recognized that it is precisely the oppression of the German minority that is bound to provoke the worst dangers for his country. But it is not conceivable that even a Beneš could bring his people to draw the practical consequences from such conclusions over their own attitude to the Sudeten Germans. Although he once told me that he was always ready to discuss the minorities question in so far as this did not bring national sovereignty into question, and that he was prepared to submit in this matter to international supervision, he may have had at the back of his mind the thought that it need not be so very awkward to have minorities questions dealt with in the forum of the League of Nations, and it may also perhaps have been the case that this observation contained a hint at the way in which the Czechs might be forced to see reason in this question. Should it be possible for the Reich Government, on the occasion of possible future negotiations with Czechoslovakia about safeguarding peace, to cause the regulation under international law of the Sudeten German community's position in this State to be placed under international supervision, then this would be the best service and the most effective help which, in the given circumstances, we could render to our sorely suffering fellow Germans [*Volksgenossen*] inside Czechoslovakia.

EISENLOHR



## No. 285

6710/E509165-68

*The Foreign Ministry to the Reich War Ministry*

Drafting Officer:

Counsellor v. Schmieden

BERLIN, April 17, 1936.

e.o. II R 1103.

The publication in Geneva on April 10 of the communiqué<sup>1</sup> agreed upon by the representatives of Britain, France and Belgium (with Italy abstaining) implies the conclusion, for the time being, of the negotiations between the so-called remaining Locarno Powers.

The French had, as you know, published two documents in Geneva on April 8<sup>2</sup> and communicated them to the British Delegation, namely, a "Memorandum on the German Peace Plan of March 31" and "Counter-proposals to the German Peace Plan". In addition the French Delegation had let the British Delegation have a further document, which contained the real French wishes in view of the reoccupation of the Rhineland by German troops. This document has so far been kept secret, but it would appear from reports, which tally with one another and which come from sources<sup>3</sup> which are in part confidential, that the main demand it contained was this: By reason of the unsatisfactory reply<sup>4</sup> given by Germany so far to the London proposals,<sup>5</sup> the period for attempts at conciliation should be regarded as at an end and the measures envisaged in the London Memorandum of March 19 and the British Government's letter of guarantee should thus now come into force; with regard to the fortifications question, a further joint *démarche* should be made in Berlin by the Locarno Powers; should this step not meet with the desired success, sanctions measures should be taken on the basis of the London proposals, these steps to be agreed upon in advance.

The negotiations of the remaining Locarno Powers on the French desires, which took up the whole of the afternoon and evening of April 10, led, however—and primarily as the result of the British attitude—to a conclusion which differed very materially from that which the French desired, and which is incorporated in the above-mentioned communiqué. In it, note is first taken of the intentions expressed in Points 3-7 of the German Peace Plan of March 31, and it is added that so far Germany has not made a contribution to the reestablishment of confidence, indispensable for the negotiation of the treaties in question. The communiqué goes on to say that, in spite of this, all opportunities which might lead to conciliation should be fully explored. For this

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 279.

<sup>4</sup> For the German reply of Mar. 31, see document No. 242.

<sup>5</sup> For the text of the proposals of the Locarno Powers of Mar. 19, see Editors' Note, p. 208.

purpose, the elucidation of a certain number of points contained in the German Peace Plan, notably those set out in the French Memorandum, is envisaged, and this is to be undertaken by the British Government. It is then emphasized that the representatives of France made [all] reserves as to the attitude of their Government in the event of any material change occurring in the present situation in the Rhineland while the negotiations were in progress. Should any such change occur, the representatives of the four Governments concerned would meet at once for discussion. Finally the communiqué also mentions that the General Staff talks envisaged in the proposals of March 19 will begin in London on April 15 and that both the French Peace Plan and—if the consent of Germany is obtained—the German Peace Plan will be communicated to the Council of the League of Nations.

Of special importance for us at present is the passage in the communiqué which deals with the possibility of any material change occurring in the situation in the Rhineland while negotiations are in progress. In a semi-official leading article in *Le Temps* of April 12, the "change in the present situation in the Rhineland" is twisted to mean that this includes any troop reinforcements or any start on the construction of fortifications in the Rhineland Zone.

The counter-questions to be put through the British Government as envisaged in the communiqué have not yet come. According to a confidential report from a well-informed source,<sup>6</sup> the British will probably not approach us until the end of next week. In view of the French elections, which take place on April 26 and May 3, and the reassembling of the Council of the League of Nations on May 11, the British Government hopes to receive our reply some time between May 4 and 9.

By order:

VON RENTHE-FINK

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<sup>6</sup> The draft initially read "... confidential report from a member of the British Foreign Office" and was amended to its final form by Renthe-Fink; see document No. 280.

## No. 286

6710/E509189-90

### *The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

SUBMIT IMMEDIATELY

No. 720

GENEVA, April 18, 1936.

Received April 20.

II R 1125.

Subject: Procedure with regard to the Locarno Treaty at the next meeting of the Council beginning on May 11, 1936.

I enclose herewith the original text of a communication from the

Secretary General, in which it is announced that the agenda of the impending ninety-second session of the Council includes, as item 19, the question of the Locarno Treaty. At the same time the Secretary General requests that, should the German Government desire to take part in the deliberations of the Council of the League of Nations on this subject, he may be informed of the name of the German delegate.<sup>1</sup>

KRAUEL

[Enclosure]<sup>2</sup>

*The Secretary General of the League of Nations to the Reich  
Minister for Foreign Affairs*

14/23367/360

LEAGUE OF NATIONS,  
GENEVA, April 18, 1936.

SIR: I have the honour to inform you that the following question is included in the agenda for the next session of the Council of the League of Nations which will commence at Geneva on Monday, May 11, 1936, at 11 a.m.:

19. Treaty of Mutual Guarantee between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy, concluded at Locarno on October 16, 1925.

Should the German Government wish to take part in the examination of this question by the Council, I should be grateful if you would have the kindness to inform me in due course of the name of the delegate appointed for this purpose.

I have the honour, etc.,

J. AVENOL  
Secretary General.

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "No reply. v. N[eurath], Apr. 20." (2) "H[err] v. Kamp-hoevenner, H[err] v. Schmieden: Krauel should, however, be told of this for his personal information. R[enthe]-F[ink], Apr. 21." In telegram No. 65 of Apr. 22 (6710/E509192) Bülow informed Krauel, for his personal information only, that for the time being the Secretary General's communication would remain unanswered.

<sup>2</sup> The text of the enclosure is in French in the original.

## No. 287

5667/H013553-63

*The Embassy in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

ANKARA, April 20, 1936.

German Delegation for the

III O 1986.

German-Turkish economic negotiations.<sup>1</sup>

The intentions of the Turkish Government in respect of the long-term development of German-Turkish economic relations can be seen from the enclosed documents—two minutes and the draft of a letter by the Chairman of the Turkish delegation.

According to this information the Turkish Government have decided to link their country economically to a wide extent [*einem weitgehenden wirtschaftlichen Anschluss*] to Germany, provided the German Government are both able and willing to concede to them either directly or indirectly a favourable balance in free foreign exchange in respect of the exchange of goods.

The negotiations between the delegations on the settlement of the trade and payments traffic on the basis of existing agreements,<sup>2</sup> which form the subject of a special report,<sup>3</sup> are not tied to these plans but have been so conducted that any breakdown in the Berlin discussions<sup>4</sup> need not necessarily affect the normal course of German-Turkish goods and payments traffic. If, on the other hand, it should prove possible to realize the Numan plans, then the Turkish Government would be prepared, by conceding higher quotas at the expense of third States, to open the Turkish market to German imports as far as the interests of Turkish industry permit, and moreover to extend the current clearing arrangement to include all payments in accordance with German wishes.

His Excellency Numan intends to present the Turkish proposals to

<sup>1</sup> The Embassy in Ankara had been informed in telegram No. 41 of Mar. 25 (5667/H013586) that the German Government proposed, for the purpose of extending the current agreement with Turkey, to send a delegation, led by Ministerialrat Wucher of the Finance Ministry, shortly after Easter (Apr. 12). In telegram No. 55 of Mar. 30 (5667/H013585) Fabricius replied that as Numan was to leave for Moscow on Apr. 18, the delegation should come at once. Telegram No. 3 of Apr. 1 (5667/H013583) to the German Consulate General in Istanbul stated that the German trade delegation would arrive there *en route* for Ankara on Apr. 6.

<sup>2</sup> Of Apr. 15, 1935; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 26 and footnote 3 thereto. A third supplementary agreement to the German-Turkish Trade Treaty of May 27, 1930 (for the text of which see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 133, pp. 528-549) was signed in Ankara on May 19, 1936 (7237/E531189-207).

<sup>3</sup> Not found; the working files of Department III of the Foreign Ministry and of the Embassy in Ankara on German-Turkish economic relations for this period have not been found in the Foreign Ministry archives. The few surviving relevant documents are from the file of Ministerialdirektor Ritter.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 5 below.



President Schacht when he visits Berlin in the first half of May.<sup>5</sup> The enclosed documents are being submitted so that the German reply can be prepared, which His Excellency Numan wishes to receive during his visit.

The German delegation has not entered into a discussion of these plans and is, indeed, of the opinion that it should refrain from adopting any attitude towards them here, since these plans are outside the competence of the delegation being of fundamental importance in respect of trade and foreign exchange policies, in respect of general policy, and, finally, in respect of their effect on Germany's relations with third States.

KELLER  
WUCHER

[Enclosure 1]

MINUTE ON A CONVERSATION WITH HIS EXCELLENCY NUMAN  
MENEMENCIOĞLU ON APRIL 13, 1936, IN THE [TURKISH]  
FOREIGN MINISTRY

Numan said that the increase in Turkish exports to Germany of recent years had caused a drop in Turkish exports to other countries, and especially to those countries from whom Turkey had received full payment in free foreign exchange: the result was that Turkey was now no longer able to provide the foreign exchange she required to meet her obligations. Although the proposals which he intended to make were governed solely by the foreign exchange situation, it was also true that Turkey's high credit balance with Germany had had the further undesirable effect of restricting the Turkish Government's freedom of action in commercial policy, inasmuch as they had been compelled in the case of almost all orders to endeavour to have them placed in Germany. In the pursuit of her Balkan policy Germany had become commercially too strong in Turkey.

In future Turkey would only be able to maintain her exchange of goods with Germany at its present volume if Germany either paid a proportion of her liabilities in respect of imports of goods in foreign exchange or if German goods paid for by Turkey through the clearing

<sup>5</sup> No records of this visit, apart from document No. 328, have been found. The relevant passage in the minutes of the meeting of the Economic Policy Committee on Apr. 27, 1936 (5667/H013550-51) reads: "The proposal by the Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry that he should, during his visit to Berlin planned for the middle of May, hold conversations with the President of the Reichsbank on the future shape of German-Turkish economic relations, is to be cordially accepted. This acceptance must however include a reference to the material objections to meeting the Turkish wish that payments for Turkish exports to Germany to be made, in part, in foreign exchange."

account were supplied to third countries, to whom Turkey owed foreign exchange. In this respect he was thinking chiefly of the delivery of German coal to France, and, of course, these deliveries on Turkey's account would have to be over and beyond Germany's normal deliveries to France.

When we Germans replied that the German Government could not entertain the question of a favourable balance in free foreign exchange, that the second [Turkish] proposal did not appear to be a practical proposition, but that the German delegation would, as desired, submit this latter suggestion to its Government, N[uman] said that the present arrangement in respect of goods and clearing traffic could be left unaltered for the moment, but that he reserved the right to present his proposals to President Schacht himself on the occasion of a journey to Germany which he had in mind to make.

When the German delegation objected that, in accordance with its instructions, it must insist on certain improvements in the present arrangement in respect of the traffic in goods, and also upon an alteration in the clearing traffic in accordance with the draft it had submitted, and that this must be done independently of his new plans, N[uman] stated that he was prepared to continue the negotiations and gave an assurance that he would be as accommodating as possible in the sphere of goods.

(The inclination, not only to maintain the exchange of goods between Germany and Turkey at its present level, but to increase it beyond this level, means that N[uman] has abandoned the attitude, which he adopted at the first meeting, that Turkey found herself obliged to reduce the German quotas, even at the sacrifice of her own export interests.)

In the matter of the so-called deficit deliveries, the speedy and positive settlement of which was described as essential—*inter alia* the Reemtsma Company's payments falling due in Turkey were mentioned in this connection—N[uman] said that he was prepared to discuss this matter within the framework of a discussion of Germany's wishes in respect of the exchange of goods, at which he would preside, on Tuesday, April 14. On this occasion, too, he said, it was intended to clarify in particular the question as to whether, possibly, products which, under the Turkish proposal, would be removed from the German free list and from the German quota list, would still be left as potential imports to other countries.

In respect of the payments traffic N[uman] handed over a counter-draft for a payments agreement.<sup>6</sup> With regard to our draft, he confined himself to the remark that under it Turkey would also lose the foreign exchange which, by reason of having no account in Turkey corresponding to account "B" in Berlin, was due to be transferred in cash. Moreover, he considered it important that the interval allowed for carrying over the balance from account "B" to account "A" should be

<sup>6</sup> Not found.

extended: for in his opinion if the balance in "B" were to be carried over into "A" by next September 1, as envisaged, this would lead to an unduly high balance in account "A", which was undesirable for Turkey. During this interval he intended to investigate how account "B" might be further reduced. Amongst other things he was bearing in mind a possible settlement of the Julius Berger case,<sup>7</sup> which according to his information would reduce account "B" by several million RM.

With regard to account "C", he would give immediate instructions to the effect that the sums should be made available on the basis of 7 per cent.

WUCHER, Min[isterial] Rat.

v. MAHS, Min[isterial] Rat.

[Enclosure 2]

MINUTE ON A CONVERSATION WITH HIS EXCELLENCY NUMAN  
MENEMENÇIOĞLU ON APRIL 14, 1936, IN THE [TURKISH] FOREIGN  
MINISTRY, FOLLOWING THE MEETING OF THE  
TWO DELEGATIONS

N[uman] referred to the statements he had made the previous day and said: Economic relations between Germany and Turkey had developed in such a way that the Turkish Government were now confronted by a fundamental decision whether they could permit this development to continue along previous lines or, whether it must be given a different direction in future. He saw two possibilities here: one could either attempt to loosen the all too close ties between Turkish foreign trade and the German market by throttling down the exchange of goods, or else one could decide in favour of linking to a wider extent [*einem weitergehenden Anschluss*] the Turkish to the German economy, which would, in particular, lead to an increase in German exports to Turkey. He himself had advocated the latter possibility in the Council of Ministers. But the Turkish Government could only adopt this, the second course, if Germany paid in foreign exchange a certain proportion of the value of the goods supplied to her by Turkey. On these conditions the Turkish Government would be prepared, in accordance with German wishes, to include in the clearing arrangement those German payments which had so far not come under it.

When asked how a further increase in German exports to Turkey could be assured in face of the competition from other countries and from Turkey's own industry, N[uman] replied that the quotas which had previously been granted to other countries, e.g., to America, would

<sup>7</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 26. No further details of this have been found.



be transferred to Germany. He would, as he had already stated, advocate a complete economic *Anschluss* of Turkey to Germany, provided that the condition about foreign exchange, which was an indispensable one for Turkey, were met. In those spheres, however, in which Turkey was making herself industrially independent, he could not hold out prospects of any special concessions. But the losses in these spheres which the German export industries concerned would in any case have to accept, could be offset by increased exports of other German goods, especially as the industrialization of Turkey would raise the country's purchasing power. Finally, N[uman] indicated that the sum in foreign exchange which he had in mind was to be about 15 per cent of the value of Turkish exports to Germany.

Upon it being pointed out that the German delegation could not discuss the question of a favourable balance in free foreign exchange, N[uman] emphasized that he was aware that his proposals went beyond the scope of the present negotiations. He would be arriving in Berlin about May 10; he wished to put his plans to President Schacht there. If these met with approval, then there could be negotiations about providing Germany with additional opportunities to export to Turkey and about an extended clearing agreement. At present he merely wished to request that the competent offices in Berlin should be informed of his projects in advance, in preparation for his talk with President Schacht. From Berlin he intended to go on to Paris and Berne in order to negotiate there about purchases of German products (coal) on the Turkish account.

In conclusion, N[uman] said he was prepared, before leaving for abroad, to complete if possible the negotiations on import quotas and on other German wishes in respect of the exchange of goods.

WUCHER, Min[isterial] Rat.

v. MAHS, Min[isterial] Rat.

[Enclosure 3]<sup>8</sup>

MR. PRESIDENT: During the negotiations which have been conducted at Ankara for the conclusion of a new Turkish-German Commercial Agreement, one question of a basic and essential nature, which I put in the name of the Government of the Republic, the German delegation were not able to resolve as they did not possess the necessary instructions for this purpose.

The modification which I requested concerned Germany granting free exchange for a part of the assets of the Central Bank of the Turkish Republic, to be deposited in Account B of the Clearing. As I judge this modification to concern the very basis of the Agreement and that it cannot be accomplished without special authorization from the Reich

<sup>8</sup> In French in the original.



Government, and since I also envisage the speedy conclusion of a new commercial agreement, I propose to have a personal conversation with His Excellency Dr. Schacht during my next visit to Germany.

The Government of the Republic hold the view that the normal functioning of our Agreement depends on the important question of foreign exchange being settled. I hope that the Reich authorities will be good enough to take a favourable view of the *exposé* which I shall have the honour to propound to them in Berlin and that a supplementary agreement can be concluded there before the existing machinery of the Turkish-German Clearing has vitiated the whole nature of the commercial exchanges.

It is in this spirit that the Government of the Republic has authorized me to sign without reserve the Commercial Agreement, dated this same day, which in my view fully satisfies the requirements of the German export trade.

I avail, etc.

## No. 288

6081/E451388-92

*The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

VIENNA, April 21, 1936.

II Oe. 1153.

### POLITICAL REPORT

I ended my Easter leave in Yugoslavia as early as Saturday, in order to be present at the visit of the German military delegation to Vienna. As already reported in my telegram No. 52,<sup>1</sup> the sending of high ranking officers of the German Wehrmacht to the Prince Eugene commemoration made an excellent impression, not only in Austrian army circles, but also on the whole national population of Austria. It showed that the glorious tradition of common brotherhood in arms is perhaps the only bond which could not be severed, and that the revival of these memories is a valuable means for reconciling the existing antagonisms.

To conclude the celebrations, I had invited the leaders of the Austrian army to a luncheon with the German delegation today. I used this occasion to praise the character of the great commander as "the soldier of the Reich" and to draw attention to Field Marshal von

<sup>1</sup> Of Apr. 20; not printed (8656/E606115). In addition to giving a preliminary account of the reception accorded to the German delegation, the telegram stated that the publication on the previous Friday, Apr. 17, in the German paper *Der Angriff* of an article about a Habsburg *putsch* supposed to take place on Apr. 20 had been much ridiculed in the Vienna press. The delegation of five officers led by General List had been sent to attend the bicentenary commemoration of Prince Eugene's death.

Blomberg's order, which ends with the words that Prince Eugene's achievements, too, had been solely for the benefit of Germany.

The Habsburg question has, contrary to all the German reports, not played any rôle these days, as I have already reported in my telegram under reference. In this connection it seems to me regrettable that the German press should have cast suspicion on the King of Spain as indulging in manœuvres against us for a return of the Habsburgs. The King assured me, in a long conversation, that he was most strongly in sympathy with the new Germany and with the Führer's daring resolve to throw off the last fetters of the Treaty of Versailles. He said he had a great wish when, as he plans to do, he visits Berlin this summer, to have a conversation with the Führer, and he asked me to sound Berlin as to how this wish would be received there. Even though I have no exaggerated opinion of the value of monarchs, who, like him, have left their country in the lurch, I nevertheless think that, in view of the many connections which the King maintains in England, France and Italy, and of the sympathy which he has always manifested towards Germany, his wish should be granted. I venture to ask that I may be instructed accordingly.<sup>2</sup>

The Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg left for Milan yesterday to deliver a political address there. Several of my confidants maintain that there are plans for him to meet Mussolini or Suvich. The purpose of such a conversation may well be the change in the political situation within Austria, which could be observed here during the last few weeks. It is certain that the introduction of general conscription<sup>3</sup> against the will of Prince Starhemberg has made his position much weaker, and that Schuschnigg as well as the army are hard at work to condemn the Heimwehr to insignificance. A clever move by the Chancellor in this direction is his declaration that his *Sturmscharen*<sup>4</sup> will in future be only an ideological army. With this, he has taken the first step towards the dissolution of the defence formations [*Wehrverbände*]<sup>5</sup> and the further elimination of the Heimwehr.

On the other hand, it can be noticed that the work of the *Freiheitsbund* [Freedom League],<sup>6</sup> supported by all sections of the Christian Social parties, is making further progress. Even now this group has already reached a stage where it has hopes of being able to remodel the Government during the coming summer, excluding Starhemberg, and bringing in certain National personages, which they hope will

<sup>2</sup> From minutes (M296/M012679-85) filed with the copy (M296/M012675-78) of the document here printed, which was sent to Referat II Spanien, it is clear that the matter was reserved for discussion between the Führer and Papen. No records of the decision reached or of any visit by the former King have been found.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 253, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the *Ostmärkische Sturmscharen* (Eastern March Storm Troops), a paramilitary formation founded by Schuschnigg.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., the various Austrian political paramilitary formations.

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 172.

enable them to reach an agreement with the National Opposition. All this is also bound up with the repercussions of the Phoenix affair;<sup>7</sup> its dirt has revolted the Federal Chancellor and its exposure has given a great fillip to the *Freiheitsbund* and to the National elements.

What the German press is putting about concerning Sir Austen Chamberlain's visit and conversations here corresponds only to a limited extent to the facts.<sup>8</sup> Sir Austen has repeatedly emphasized that he merely wants to obtain a personal picture of the difficulties of the problem of Central Europe and he was very reserved in what he said. According to information from the Secretary General of the Fatherland Front,<sup>9</sup> Sir Austen's conversations with the Chancellor and the Foreign Minister clearly showed that the British statesman was endeavouring to detach Austria from dependence upon Italy and to induce her to incline more towards the Little Entente. According to Colonel Adam Sir Austen's statements could be taken to imply that, in the British view, Italy would defend Austria's independence in all circumstances, but that Italy's position was at present much too difficult for Austria to be able to forgo the support of the League of Nations. It seems he said that in any case, a German-Austrian agreement was always the best guarantee for Austria's independence, provided that the Schuschnigg Cabinet made a number of concessions in the sphere of domestic politics to the Deutsch-National [German Nationalist] elements in Austria.

It is therefore not surprising that neither Herr von Berger nor the Federal Chancellor were very satisfied with their conversations with the former British Foreign Secretary.

I had an opportunity to speak to Sir Austen the day before yesterday. On his way back from Prague he will spend a few more days in Vienna and will give me an opportunity of explaining the German-Austrian problem to him from our point of view.<sup>10</sup>

If it is the case that the English wish to endeavour to compensate for French concessions in the question of fortifying the Rhineland by German concessions in the Central European question, then it would be

<sup>7</sup> An official enquiry into the affairs of the Austrian Phoenix General Life Insurance Company had revealed that this company was in deficit of 250 million schilling and had also uncovered a number of irregularities, including illegal payments of nearly three million Austrian schilling to press organs, political parties, among them the Austrian Nazi Party, and to certain Austrian civil servants, among them the Head of the Government Department of Insurance Supervision, Herr Ochsner, who committed suicide. The Company was liquidated on Apr. 10, 1936, by Government decree, and a number of its directors arrested. Its Czech, Italian and Balkan affiliates were also involved, over four million schilling having been paid out in 1934 for "extraordinary expenditure in Prague". See *The Times* of Mar. 27, Apr. 29, 1936, *et passim*.

<sup>8</sup> In the latter part of April Sir Austen Chamberlain paid private visits to Vienna, Prague and Budapest; reports from Prague are filmed on 7518/E541118-19; 24; see also document No. 320, and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>9</sup> Col. Walter Adam was Secretary General until May 1936, when he was succeeded by Guido Zernatto; see also Zernatto: *Die Wahrheit über Österreich* (New York, 1938), pp. 79-98.

<sup>10</sup> Papen reported on this conversation, which took place on Apr. 24, in despatch A 2226 of Apr. 25 (1549/376277-82).



wise to lay down as soon as possible the lines along which the forthcoming negotiations concerning the Central European region are to be conducted.

I venture to reserve a further report on this question.<sup>11</sup>

PAPEN

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<sup>11</sup> No further report on this question has been found.

## No. 289

6710/E509290-95

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1710

PARIS, April 21, 1936.

Received April 23.

II R 1155.

Subject: The dilemmas of French foreign policy in face of the Rhineland conflict.

In face of the Rhineland conflict the French policy of collective security, which found its expression in so astonishingly theoretical and utopian a manner in the so-called French Peace Plan,<sup>1</sup> is confronted with a series of weighty dilemmas, which involve it in a vicious circle with hardly any way out.

### 1. *Italy*

As is known, during the Abyssinian conflict there were for many months two opposing schools in French public opinion. One represented the view that Italy should be treated with the greatest possible consideration, so that she could be led back as quickly as possible into the Stresa front and put in a position once more to take over completely the task, which France so gladly assigns her, of keeping watch on the Brenner; this school of thought was therefore opposed to sanctions. The other school was in favour of sanctions, because it regarded action against Italy as a test case for any subsequent case of emergency against Germany. Since March 7 this contradiction no longer exists. Now that the "case of emergency" is considered as applying, even those who up till now had been emphatically demanding the application of Article 16 against Italy, have quite come round to the viewpoint of those who have continually been calling for a combined Franco-Italian defensive front against Germany. Even the most whole-hearted supporters of the French thesis of collective security now, with cynical *naïveté*, associate themselves with the opinion that Italy must be allowed to reap the fruits of her pact violation against Abyssinia, so as

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.



to restore the Italian watch on the Brenner. In this connection it is significant that this change of front was based entirely on considerations of practical policy and that not once was the attempt made to deck it out with some legal or moral doctrine. This change of front confirms, with all the clarity that could be desired, that in French eyes the concept of collective security had been minted solely for Germany. The flaw, which has now become public knowledge, in the French security theory is one which will derogate from France's future attitude towards Germany. It is, for instance, at present not yet possible to foresee whether and to what extent Britain will be inclined to quote this precedent where any question arises of British support against Germany. Nor can it be a matter of indifference to the Little Entente, particularly Yugoslavia and Rumania, or to the Balkan Entente, that they will in future have to reckon with an Italian Power, which, with the help of France, has emerged considerably stronger from an attack on one weaker than itself. Such considerations, admittedly, do not for the time being arouse much concern in public opinion here. There is satisfaction that a conflict with Italy has been avoided, and hope that she will do something in return, but no desire is evinced to examine more closely the question of whether, ultimately, it is not a miscalculation, in the struggle for her own static objectives against her dynamic opponent, Germany, to count on an ally who, indeed, gladly makes use of the help of France in pursuit of her own interests, but who, in the structure both of her domestic and her foreign policy, is more akin to Germany than to France and whose present successes are, in any case, to be ascribed to methods of foreign policy which run entirely contrary to France's basic theories.

## 2. *Britain*

French relations with Britain since the war have been characterized by continual ups and downs, according as to whether it was thought that Britain had been won over to the collective front against Germany, or whether it was feared that Britain was supporting the German struggle against the system of the Versailles Treaty. During periods of the latter kind, it was usual continually to link criticism of Britain with special propaganda in favour of the idea of a direct understanding between France and Germany; and people were fond of adding that it was Britain herself who was trying to thwart this understanding, because she wanted to maintain her rôle as arbiter between the two continental neighbour States. It may be recalled how in the immediate past, under the Laval Government, this conflicting assessment of Britain's attitude also affected French domestic policy during the first months of the Abyssinian conflict when the Right reproached the British Government with wishing to use France, against her own interests, as a tool against Italy, while the Left attacked the French Government, because, to please Italy, they were not taking advantage

of Britain's willingness to associate herself with the French concept of collective security. The attitude of the British Government, and that of British public opinion too, towards the German step of March 7 came as a very great disappointment, particularly to the Left, because Britain, in spite of the right to call on her which France thought she possessed under the Locarno Pact, refused to regard the remilitarization of German territory as being analogous to a territorial attack. A period of great annoyance with Britain began which at times reached such a pitch that the whole basis of Franco-British relations appeared to be called in question. Thus from the standpoint that the Locarno Pact still remained in force between France and Britain and that under it Britain, as a guarantor, was now required to render aid, the old reproach that Britain was striving to maintain her position as arbiter between France and Germany was fostered and given fresh impetus. Meanwhile, however, realization of the fact that it is not in France's interest to push her controversy with Britain too far seems to be gaining ground. The French Government could not help accepting the British viewpoint that the agreement of March 19,<sup>2</sup> which had been reached with such difficulty, could not yet become operative, because the negotiations with Germany could not yet be regarded as having broken down; nor could they help stating that they agreed to the British Government's putting certain further questions to Germany to obtain a precise definition of her intentions and ideas.<sup>3</sup> Although in the opinion of France this procedure once again accords Britain that position of arbiter to which such strong exception is taken, there is no longer any audible criticism on this subject.

### 3. *Central European and Balkan States*

In relations with the Central European and Balkan States too the German step of March 7 has increased or at least publicly disclosed France's conflicting position.

The strong repercussions which Germany's action in the Rhineland had in France is not least, but rather is primarily, attributable to the fact that France is under the impression that it opens up the whole problem of her relations with the Eastern States and places these in an entirely new light. In the remilitarization, particularly if it is combined with the construction of a line of fortifications in the Rhineland, France sees a German intention—or at least sees that in practice the effect is produced—of separating France militarily and politically from these States. Collective security, as conceived by French theory up till now, will, in French opinion, be prejudiced by the German action in two ways: on

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<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432.

the one hand by the weakening of those States which, now that Germany's security in the West has been increased, will be more exposed to German pressure, and, simultaneously, by the fact that it has been made more difficult for France to exert her military and political influence on them. The dilemma of French foreign policy lies, therefore, in the fact that, just as much as it is becoming essential for France to strengthen her relations with Central Europe and the Balkans if she wants to preserve her political position there, so the obstacles which Germany can put in the way of such a policy are increasing. These considerations have led certain circles here to go as far as to question whether it is really in France's interests to regain her influence on the Central European and Balkan States or whether she would not rather have enough living space [*Lebensraum*] if she consolidated her position in Western Europe and in her colonial empire and let her interests in the East recede. I am convinced that this circle is, for the moment, in the minority and that the majority is of the opinion that France owes it to her position as a Great Power to fight for the maintenance of her influence in the East. The difficult task set France in the present situation is, however, realized by all.

#### 4. *Soviet Russia*

The conflicting attitude adopted by France towards the Soviet Union requires, in view of the developments in recent years, no further explanation. The assiduous cultivation of relations with Soviet Russia is regarded here as in all circumstances essential, and an economic, political and also military marriage of convenience between the two countries as desirable. But widespread doubts exist—both for reasons of domestic and foreign policy and on military grounds—lest the relationship between the two countries has not taken on the character of an alliance which is more advantageous to Soviet Russia than to France.

#### 5. *The League of Nations*

Finally, doubts here with regard to the League of Nations are now public and profound.

The developments during the post-war years clearly showed that, from the end of the war, France was in favour of, and supported, the League of Nations, because in it she believed that she possessed a practical and flexible instrument for the maintenance of her political and military superiority over Germany. Germany's growing position of strength, which has been plain for all to see in the Rhineland action, has, however, confirmed in an equally unmistakable manner that the League of Nations is becoming less and less suited to serve as a purely French tool against Germany. In the Abyssinian conflict, when France was pondering the question of which to put first in the League of



Nations, consideration of her own direct interests, or the principle of collective security, which latter would have been more useful for the French conception of the character of the League of Nations as an anti-German instrument, she was herself compelled by force of circumstances to follow the first course. In the Rhineland conflict, which brought up for direct debate the possibility of using the League of Nations against Germany, this dilemma came to the fore in a manner even more painful for France. On the one hand there was the desire to adhere to the old idea, which in the so-called French Peace Plan has produced a paper fantasy of strangely unrealistic blooms; on the other hand there was the growing realization that Germany had grown too strong and that the time had gone by when the League of Nations States could be used against Germany contrary to their own interests, for the sake of League of Nations ideologies, or for what France wishes to impose on the League of Nations as such.

FORSTER

## No. 290

5578/E400773-80

*The Air Attaché in Great Britain to the Reich Air Minister  
and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe*<sup>1</sup>

LONDON, April 21, 1936.

II M 1242 g.

Enclosure 8 to L-Ber. 17/36<sup>2</sup>

Subject: General Staff Talks in London.

I was today given the following authoritative information by the Air Ministry:

(1) In all, the General Staff talks lasted for two days. In all, two discussions, each lasting not quite one hour, took place on aviation matters.

(2) On the British side there took part:

The Deputy Chief of the Air Staff, Air Vice Marshal Courteney, The Subdirector of Plans,<sup>3</sup> Group Captain Harris, and his senior assistant, Wing Commander Andrews.

(3) The discussions were held jointly with the French and Belgian representatives (no separate discussions with the French alone, or the Belgians alone).

(4) The talks were confined solely to an exchange of information regarding the numbers of military aircraft available in each country in the event of a conflict.

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was transmitted by the Reich Air Ministry to the Foreign Ministry, where it was received on Apr. 23.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original with the German translation set in brackets alongside.



In accordance with the instructions of the British Government, which had also been furnished to the other two Governments before the beginning of the talks, there was no exchange of information on performance of aircraft or on possible methods of employment of air formations. The British also refused to discuss any operational plans or methods.

(5) The indications given in the press that the talks will be continued by the Air Attachés are described by the Air Ministry as a gesture devoid of significance. It was said that the talks envisaged in the Government's programme had ended. There was nothing further to discuss, and nothing further would be discussed.

(6) When I asked whether I could be given any data on the strength of the British Air Force, I was told that the other two participants in the talks had been told nothing that was not contained in the *Air Force List*. It was added that the whole conference had been a farce; it had been quite unnecessary for France to send a special delegation, as they had learnt nothing that they did not know before. The British Government's point of view had been that, owing to the wording of the Treaty, the negotiations had to take place, although they were not welcomed. Outwardly, therefore, matters had been let take their course and inwardly they had been deprived of any value.

R. WENNINGER  
Major General

## No. 291

8656/E606111-112

### *The State Secretary to the Legation in Yugoslavia*

Telegram

BERLIN, April 24, 1936—2:30 p.m.

No. 42

zu II Oe. 1127<sup>1</sup> I.

With reference to your telegram No. 41 of April 19.<sup>1</sup>

1. Our Legation in Vienna has reported,<sup>2</sup> with reference to the recent press reports that a Legitimist *Putsch* was imminent, that no factual basis for these reports has been found to exist and that a *Putsch* is most unlikely given the present Austro-Yugoslav tension and the

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (8656/E606110). In this telegram Heeren reported a conversation with the Yugoslav Minister President who had first stated that he intended to bring up Austria's breach of the Treaty of St. Germain [cf. document No. 253, footnote 3] in the Little Entente Conference in May, with a view to an appeal to the League Council. Secondly, Stojadinović had expressed the conviction that sooner or later the Archduke Otto would appear in Vienna under Italian protection; in this event the Little Entente were agreed that they would mobilize, but an actual invasion would depend on the attitude of Britain, France and above all Germany. He therefore wished to know the probable German attitude.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 51 of Apr. 18 (not printed; 8656/E606109); see also document No. 288.

uncertain attitude of the Hungarian Legitimists. Nor has any other information reached us here which might lead us to expect a Habsburg restoration in the near future. We would be interested to learn on what the Yugoslav Minister President bases the conviction he expressed to you.

2. For the rest, our attitude to the restoration question remains that of which you were informed in our telegram No. 44 of July 10, 1935.<sup>3</sup> I am, therefore, in agreement with the attitude you adopted to the Minister President and beg you to continue to hold language in the sense of the instructions contained in the aforementioned telegram.

3. Neither to the Government to which you are accredited nor elsewhere must we commit ourselves to a definite attitude in case of a restoration of the Habsburgs, for there would thus arise obligations which, like assistance pacts, might be misused. On the other hand we need make no secret of our basic attitude to this question.<sup>4</sup>

BÜLOW<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 198 with footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> Heeren replied in telegram No. 44 of Apr. 25 (8656/E606119) that Stojadinović's fears were based less on hard facts than on reports from Paris and Rome that Italy regarded a Habsburg restoration in Austria as in her own interests.

<sup>5</sup> Under despatch zu II Oe. 1195 of Apr. 27 (8656/E606120), the text of the document here printed and excerpts from the documents cited in footnotes 1 and 4 above were sent for confidential information and guidance to the Missions in Rome, Paris, London, Warsaw, Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Bucharest, Sofia, Brussels and Berne. In despatch 2151 of May 8 (8656/E606121) Hassell reported that the Yugoslav information did not accord with his own impressions or information. A reliable informant had expressly declared that it was incorrect, "if only because Italy did not wish to involve herself in further difficulties". A marginal note by Renthe-Fink against this sentence reads: "Correct!"

## No. 292

5669/H016060-65

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer:

BERLIN, April 24, 1936.

Counsellor von Rintelen.

e.o. II Fr. 1240.

[II R 1178.]<sup>2</sup>

For Ambassador Count Welczeck.

If, during your forthcoming visits to influential French quarters, the conversation should turn to the present political situation, you

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was originally drafted on Apr. 22 as a telegram to Paris for Ambassador Count Welczeck, who had arrived in Paris from Madrid that day to take up his new post. In a memorandum of Apr. 23 (4603/E191058) Bülow noted that he had had telephone conversations with Welczeck on Apr. 22 and 23, and that Welczeck would leave Paris for Berlin that evening to receive instructions. The document here printed was evidently handed to Welczeck during his stay in Berlin. It bears many alterations in Bülow's and Rintelen's handwriting; a fair copy is cited in footnote 2 below.

<sup>2</sup> Taken from another copy (6710/E509380-84).

should, besides the instructions of April 9 and 13—II R 1036<sup>3</sup> and II R 1053<sup>4</sup>—make particular use of the following points of view:

1. The French are anxious to attribute to our action the blame for the gravity and difficulties of the present situation. The blame, however, does not lie with Germany, but with France, who, by concluding the Pact with Russia, contravened both the letter and the spirit of the Locarno Treaty, destroyed its equilibrium and materially diminished its significance for Germany's security.

That, until the conclusion of the Russian Pact, we put up with the unilateral demilitarization of the Rhineland, was because we attached importance to the maintenance of the Locarno Treaty as a guarantee of peace. For us the treaty structure of Locarno could not but lose a great deal of its significance as a guarantee of peace, when the Franco-Russian Pact (supplemented by the Czechoslovak-Russian Pact) brought about a radical shift in the whole European security system. In this Pact France is striving to gain more security for herself. In view of the unambiguous way in which it is directed against Germany, we are bound to regard it as reducing our security and even, indeed, as a threat. In these circumstances, quite apart from the legal aspect, it was impossible for us both politically and militarily to accept the new situation which France had created in spite of our representations or to agree any longer to the demilitarization of the Rhineland as a unilaterally operative obligation. The assumption that the conclusion of the Russian Pact was only a pretext for us, is entirely erroneous.

Nonetheless when you put forward these lines of argument you should, at the same time, emphasize that you have no intention of harping on considerations of the past; your task naturally relates to the future. You should say that you hope ways and means will be found to reach an understanding and to contribute constructively to the cause of peace.

2. On the French side it seems still to be believed that the resumption proclaimed by Germany of full sovereignty over Reich territory can still somehow be called in question, in that we are expected to refrain from constructing fortifications or something of the kind. Should this point be raised with you, you should say that you attach importance to its being quite clearly understood from the beginning that, for us, there can be no question of anything of the kind. Abstention from constructing fortifications can only apply on both sides of the frontier or not at all. This involves a perfectly clear case of the application of the principle of equality of rights, and nothing more. If, on the French side, there should be ascribed to us the

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 272.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 271 and footnote 5 thereto.



intention of wishing to thwart France's intervention in some far-distant conflict—though this is something which we do not even remotely contemplate and such a desire has merely been attributed to us—then the use of such arguments only proves to us that the French security policy is clearly concerned not only with France's security, but also, and primarily, with the possibility of action against Germany, and against such action we have, indeed, the most serious cause to bar the way. We must demand of France that she should show the same measure of understanding for our security needs as we show for hers.

3. The idea that we want to isolate France—by means, for example, of the non-aggression pacts proposed by us—is completely erroneous, and, in view of our willingness to return to the League of Nations, can scarcely be taken seriously. But what we cannot tolerate is the replacement of the idea, embodied in the League of Nations Covenant, of a collective alliance of the world's States, by a policy of alliances directed more or less against us, the realization of which we are, of course, in no way prepared to further.

4. With regard to the French Peace Plan,<sup>5</sup> you should confine yourself more or less to remarking that we have the feeling that the French proposals are trying to settle too much at once. In view of our many years' experience so far we have good reason to doubt whether a complete solution can be reached at one attempt. Up till now every proposal for a complete solution for Europe, such as, last year, the substantially different programme of the London communiqué of February 3,<sup>6</sup> has proved to be unrealizable. For this reason, we consider it would be better to follow the course, proposed by us, of first concluding a new western pact to replace the lapsed Locarno Pact, after which the further stages could then be dealt with.

5. In spite of the gravity of the present crisis, there is still the predominating fact of the desire, common, as we hope, to both sides to reach a speedy understanding. That in Germany this desire remains decisive in determining our attitude has repeatedly been stated by the Führer and Chancellor. The German election campaign was conducted under the slogan "Peace, Understanding and Equality of Rights". On this basis it must surely be possible to build a structure of peace. We are convinced that this offers a greater guarantee for the long run, precisely because it will be freed from the clutter which previous similar attempts inherited from the past, whereas there now seems to be a possibility of constructing a treaty organization based on absolute and mutual equality of rights.

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<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., the Joint Declaration issued on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the French Republic as a result of the conversations between the British and French Ministers in London, Feb. 1-3, 1935; British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5.



5. [sic] In general you should in your conversations avoid going deeply into details, otherwise there is a danger that points of disagreement will become too evident and that the future discussions will be anticipated. It would be as well for you to emphasize the personal character of your remarks.

BÜLOW

No. 293

6710/E509372-76

*The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P. 14

WARSAW, April 24, 1936.

Received April 25.

II R 1177.

POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Foreign Minister Beck on Poland's attitude to the security problem.

The general impression gained from the attitude of the semi-official Polish press here recently is that Foreign Minister Beck is no longer as opposed to the idea of collective security as he was, and that, consequently, [he thinks that,] in the organizing of peace, the German-Polish Non-Aggression Declaration<sup>1</sup>, too, must be built into a collective framework. Moreover, there have been reports to the effect that collective pact plans which would include Russia were discussed on the occasion of the visit of the Latvian Foreign Minister, Munters.<sup>2</sup> I took an opportunity offered me today of sounding Foreign Minister Beck as to his attitude, as he had in any case promised me some time ago that after Easter he would acquaint me with his views on the peace plans.

M. Beck started by saying that even upon closer examination he did not find the French Peace Plan<sup>3</sup> much to his taste. It dealt, after all, exclusively with proposals which had long ago proved to be impracticable and which, furthermore, were still dogged by the fault of wishing to settle everything at once. In the discussions during the next few months two schools of thought would come into conflict, one of which wanted to delegate to the League of Nations the widest possible powers and functions which would, as far as possible, be defined in detail in the manner of the Geneva Protocol,<sup>4</sup> whilst the other

<sup>1</sup> Of Jan. 26, 1934; see vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>2</sup> Vilhelms Munters, Secretary General of the Latvian Foreign Ministry, paid an official visit to Warsaw on Mar. 30 and 31. The Embassy in Warsaw reported on this visit in despatch PV 32 of Mar. 31 (9019/E631996-98).

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 223, footnote 6.

wished to accord to the League of Nations only general supervision without laying down in advance what its functions should be in all eventualities. Here in the East, he said, the attitude to this question could perhaps best be summed up by the phrase "more security through less complicated procedure". It was felt, indeed, that the German Peace Plan<sup>5</sup> was pursuing just such an aim, and for this reason the plan was arousing great interest here. With regard to the details of this plan, he admitted, he said, that it was important first to create a substitute for Western Locarno. He was also inclined to think that certain differences with regard to settling peace in the East arose automatically, because here a guarantor was lacking. Neither Britain nor Italy would be prepared to commit themselves any further in the East, and any guarantee from Russia was, of course, out of the question. It did, nevertheless, appear to him important that the formulation of the envisaged pacts for the East should avoid giving the impression of any tendency to discriminate. Whether the pacts would be apt for guaranteeing peace in the East would largely depend on there being no major differences, with regard, for instance, to the duration of the treaties.

In this connection M. Beck pointed out that, in fact, efforts were being made by a certain quarter to bring in Russia as a guarantor for the Eastern non-aggression pacts. Moreover, he repeatedly and with much emphasis expressed the opinion that soon the Soviet Union for their part too—either alone or in conjunction with France—would come forward with some sort of initiative and he remarked that we must not allow ourselves to be taken in by their present reserve.

I asked M. Beck whether Latvia was also one of the States in favour of a Russian guarantee and whether M. Munters, on the occasion of his visit to Warsaw, had put forward any suggestions of this kind. M. Beck replied that this had not been the case. As on previous occasions, M. Munters had spoken only of bilateral treaties with Germany and in so doing had expressed the opinion that a non-aggression pact between Germany and Lithuania would, in itself, already be of great importance to the general situation of the Baltic bloc, but that naturally a non-aggression treaty between Germany and Latvia would be even more welcome. M. Munters had mentioned Russia only in connection with the plans for a reorganization of the League of Nations, starting with the idea that it was difficult for the small States to champion remote interests and that it would, perhaps, be more practical if regional groups were formed within the League of Nations, upon whom the responsibility for maintaining peace within their region would then devolve. When I objected that the application of this idea would, in practice, mean the incorporation of the former Eastern Pact within the

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<sup>5</sup> Document No. 242.

framework of the League of Nations, M. Beck replied that the Polish point of view, as set down in the Note<sup>6</sup> containing basic principles on the former Eastern Pact, had not changed at all, but that M. Munters' proposed settlement had the advantage that it was not directed against Germany, as the Eastern Pact had been, and that it would allow the choice of which States should belong to each region to be made on rational principles. In any case M. Munters' ideas had in no way been studied very deeply.

I reminded M. Beck that he had previously only advocated bilateral treaties; he was now apparently less averse to the collective concept than he used to be. M. Beck replied that his opinion was unaltered. He had never, in principle, been an opponent of the collective concept, but so far no one had been able to show him a collective plan which would deal satisfactorily with Polish interests and which would mean real progress. If a new plan were submitted to him, he would examine it impartially and without prejudice. In his examination, however, he would bear two things in mind, firstly, could the plan be made to accord with the basic principles laid down by Marshal Pilsudski;<sup>7</sup> and secondly, judging by the experiences of recent years, might progress be expected? He would never forget, he said, that, amidst the chaos in which the whole of Europe had been plunged, it had been possible here in the East to achieve pacification precisely by means of a bilateral treaty.

Finally, M. Beck spoke of the British questionnaire<sup>8</sup> and remarked that he was expecting further enquiries from Britain as to possible Polish wishes.

V. MOLTKE

<sup>6</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 226, enclosure.

<sup>7</sup> Jozef Pilsudski, Chief of State 1918-1922; Marshal of Poland; Minister of War and Inspector General of the Polish Army until his death on May 12, 1935.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432, and document No. 280.

## No. 294

1549/376271-73

### *The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

SECRET  
A 2172

VIENNA, April 24, 1936.  
Received May 4, 1936.  
Rk. 5185.

Subject: Further increase of political tension inside Austria.

The mounting public excitement occasioned by the revelations of corruption in the Phoenix scandal<sup>1</sup> seems to have led the Schuschnigg Government to consider a possible change in the composition of the

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 288, footnote 7.



Government. According to reports from Graz and Klagenfurt, feelings have reached such a pitch in consequence of further arrests in the last few days that the National elements are expected to resort to acts of desperation.

When a group of gentlemen—who come together regularly at the Grand Hotel—met a few days ago, the former Federal Chancellor Ender<sup>2</sup> addressed them, as I learn confidentially, on Austria's political situation at home and abroad. He contrasted the system of dualism within the leadership of the Government advocated recently by Schuschnigg (Schuschnigg: Head of the Government, Starhemberg: the Fatherland Front) with Starhemberg's endeavours to achieve the totalitarian Fascist State—[Ender] taking the view that it was imperative to combat these endeavours.

In the debate the Federal Chancellor emphasized that one could very well conceive of the formation of a National group within the Fatherland Front, through which an understanding could be reached with the Reich. But there was no depending on the Reich not taking advantage of such a situation and trying, by means of this National group, to overrun everything else.

Whilst this remark by Schuschnigg already shows a certain advance in his recognizing that the key to domestic pacification in Austria lies, solely and exclusively, in the relationship between Austria and the Reich, this recognition has in the last few days made further progress.

I was informed yesterday that the Federal Chancellor had asked his *Vice Chef de Cabinet*, Schmidt,<sup>3</sup> to give him the names of persons in the National camp with whom he could get in touch with a view to their entering the Government. *Vice Chef de Cabinet* Schmidt thereupon named:

Lieutenant Field Marshal Bardolff

Rechtsanwalt Dr. Seyss-Inquart

Staatsrat von Glaise-Horstenau

and the present Rector of the University, [Professor] Menghin.

The entry of one or more of these persons into the Government, if made dependent on the fulfilment of quite definite conditions, would, naturally, mean very considerable progress. I would regard it as of quite decisive importance because with this entry there will be created an opportunity for the National Opposition to be incorporated as a compact body in the Fatherland Front. Given the impetus of the National elements this step would undoubtedly soon lead to further successes. What must be guarded against at the present moment is the making of excessive demands. The essential thing is first of all to manage to get a foothold.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Otto Ender was Federal Chancellor from December 1930 to June 1931.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Guido Schmidt.



Yesterday I at once got in touch with Lieutenant Field Marshal Bardolff and shall report further on how the matter develops; I request that it be treated as very confidential.

Starhemberg has invited the Leaders of the Heimwehr to a meeting in the Kleiner Konzerthausaal. If he has noticed the manoeuvres that are in progress against him, one may expect surprises.

From Party circles here I learn in confidence that recently resort has again been had to the formation of terrorist groups within the SA. I would venture respectfully to express the request that orders be given—as far as it is in any way possible to do so from the Reich—for this folly to stop. Nothing, in my view, could more greatly disturb the present negotiations with Britain than the start of a wave of terrorism in Austria, of which—even if we had nothing whatever to do with it—it would always be asserted that it had been staged by the Reich.<sup>4</sup>

PAPEN

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<sup>4</sup> A minute on this document, dated May 4 (1549/376274) and addressed to Lammers by Thomsen reads: "The content of the attached report by Minister von Papen has been reported to the Führer and Chancellor by Captain Wiedemann [Adjutant to the Führer]."

"With reference to the final paragraph of the report—formation of SA terrorist groups in Austria—the Führer has instructed Captain Wiedemann to have conveyed via Herr Reschny to Party comrades in Austria a stern warning to refrain from such indiscretions. This has been done. [See document No. 297.] I have informed the Foreign Ministry of this."

## No. 295

4619/E198293

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, April 25, 1936.

RM 358.

The Italian Ambassador today showed me in strict confidence some telegrams from Ambassador Cerruti,<sup>1</sup> which had been sent to him from Rome, in which the latter continues his campaign of incitement against Germany in his customary manner. In one of these telegrams Cerruti reports, *inter alia*, on a conversation with Poncet,<sup>2</sup> in which the latter had told him about certain unfriendly and far from flattering remarks said to have been made by Field Marshal von Blomberg with regard to Italy's conduct of the war in Abyssinia. I rejected as tendentious and untrue the remarks attributed to the Field Marshal. From the tone of Signor Cerruti's telegram it was, however, obvious that he was seeking to stir up resentment in Rome against Herr von Blomberg.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> Italian Ambassador in France.

<sup>2</sup> André François-Poncet, French Ambassador in Germany.

## No. 296

4602/E190438-42

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, April 25, 1936.

II Ung. 319.

The Hungarian Minister called upon me today to inform me of his visit to Budapest. In very lengthy and frequently somewhat obscure statements, and opening by saying that his Government had no intention of volunteering advice unasked or of dictating a line of advance to us, he explained that Horthy, Gömbös and Kánya were all three much disturbed about the international situation and about the Flandin Plan.<sup>1</sup> In particular, the renunciation of revision for a period of twenty-five years seemed to them unacceptable, the German non-aggression pact with Czechia sinister, and Czechia's obvious intention of forcing herself into the Rome Pact<sup>2</sup> dangerous. Hungary had hitherto pursued a Germanophil policy, for she hoped indirectly to obtain benefits for herself from the strengthening of the German Reich. Were the French plans to materialize, Kánya would suffer political shipwreck and someone else with other political aims would have to replace him.

The Hungarian Government therefore asked us to consider whether it would not be possible to counteract the threatening effects of the Flandin Plan and the repercussions on political morale of the non-aggression pact with Czechia by our concluding beforehand a pact of friendship and consultation with Hungary, which would mean a great gain in Hungarian prestige *vis-à-vis* the Little Entente. If this would be going to far for us, could we Germans at least consider a pact of friendship with Hungary and a highly publicized return visit to Budapest by the Reich Minister, Freiherr von Neurath (returning Gömbös' visit).<sup>3</sup>

The Minister then referred to our last conversation,<sup>4</sup> when I had said that neither by Budapest nor by Rome had we been fully informed about the latest Rome talks, since we had been told nothing at all of the new defence measure<sup>5</sup> impending in Austria. He said that Kánya had charged him to assure us that we had been kept fully and thoroughly informed. The Austrian Defence Law had not been discussed in Rome, but merely announced by Schuschnigg, and that not for the first time. Further, they had not been told the date of the Defence Law,

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Rome Protocols of Mar. 17, 1934; see document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

<sup>3</sup> Gömbös visited Berlin from Sept. 28-Oct. 1, 1935; see vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 307, 309-11, 314, 316, 318, 328, 337, 344, 348 and 380.

<sup>4</sup> Of Apr. 3; see document No. 253.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., the reintroduction of conscription in Austria on Apr. 1, 1936; see *ibid.*, footnote 3.

but merely that Austria would "shortly" be taking this step which had long been planned. Hungary and Italy had merely taken note of this information. The Minister said that he was further instructed to assure us that the independence of Austria had not been debated, and that there had been no thought whatever of guaranteeing this independence in some way.

Kánya, he said, had likewise given the same information to our Minister last Saturday (April 18)<sup>6</sup> and with the same frankness and clarity.

Then, on his Government's instructions, the Minister turned the conversation to the Rome Pact which, he said, had been given fresh vitality by the latest meeting in Rome, and spoke of the French being inclined to regard the Rome Pact as directed against Germany or of their hoping that it was. Kánya suggested that Germany should join the Rome Pact, to counteract this false impression, but, above all, in order to counteract France's growing influence over Italy. The Austrian tension was of course an obstacle to our joining the Rome Pact. But perhaps this would be just the right way to get rid of this tension. Kánya, said the Minister, was able to assure us that Schuschnigg was prepared to come to an understanding with Germany on the basis of the recognition of Austria's independence and a non-intervention pact (perhaps one of limited duration only). By this means it would be possible to eliminate Franco-Czech influence in Central Europe, which was the more necessary since Britain was beginning to support the French endeavours in Central Europe. It appeared advisable to take preventive measures against the pressure that we must expect. German accession to the Rome Pact would be exceptionally well fitted to serve this purpose.

I thanked the Minister for his observations and said I could only give him a provisional answer. We did not take the Flandin Plan seriously; it was primarily an election manoeuvre, and the future French Government would hardly maintain the Plan. Renunciation of revision for twenty-five years I regarded as Utopian. Since we could not yet foresee what course the negotiations would take after the French elections, I must reserve our attitude to the proposal for a consultative pact with Hungary. I merely wished to observe that I well understood Kánya's line of thought in relation to this proposal. I was grateful for the information on the course of the latest Rome conference. As far as the Rome Pact was concerned, we viewed it as a rule much more from the Rome-Vienna angle than from that of Budapest-Vienna. One must not forget that the Rome Pact was without doubt originally directed against Germany and further that it was a means of exercising Italy's indisputable dominance over Austria. Consequently I could

<sup>6</sup> Mackensen reported on this conversation in telegram No. 28 of Apr. 18 (9577 E674885).



not imagine our joining it. Italy's influence over Austria did not disturb us since it would one day be shaken off by Austria herself. We could not, however, be called upon to accord it recognition. A non-interference pact with Austria was out of the question since it would lead to constant complaints or interventions. Given a common language, culture, political history and so on, every suggestion from Germany could, in consequence of the reaction in Austria, be interpreted as interference. It was true that Britain was obviously coming to interest herself increasingly in the Austrian question, but I was inclined to regard this as a manoeuvre in British internal politics and perhaps also as an attempt to find a basis for a new community of interests with France. But we entertained useful and necessary relations with Britain because we could not abandon Britain to French influence; for this reason too it would be out of the question for us to join the Rome Pact, in other words, openly to declare for Italy at a time of Anglo-Italian tension.

The Minister then wanted to know our views on the non-aggression pacts and above all as to their duration. He seemed especially perturbed by the twenty-five years' duration of the German Locarno proposal, the introduction of this twenty-five-year period into the non-aggression treaties, and its obvious connection with the renunciation of revision for a twenty-five-year period contained in the Flandin Plan. I told him that we were more or less indifferent to periods of duration since what mattered with regard to the non-aggression treaties was the spirit behind them.

Finally, the Minister informed me, on Kánya's instructions, that Hungary would not demand or bring about equality of rights at the present time, but at a later date. He spoke of this autumn as a possible date. He was instructed to ask whether we would then be prepared to afford Hungary moral support by means of an official statement in the press or some similar action. In reply I told the Minister that our whole policy and our friendship for Hungary obliged us to give her such moral support. But the extent of our support depended on the choice of the right moment. If we did not consider Hungary's choice of time to be a fortunate one, we would be hard put to it to afford her full support in the way envisaged. The negotiations during the summer however would result in our being constantly in touch with Hungary so that we would probably be better advised to discuss this problem later on. For the moment, that was to say until receipt of the British questionnaire, it was in no way possible to foresee how matters would develop and there was nothing to be gained by indulging in speculation.

BÜLOW

The Minister also said that the Austrian move had unleashed a campaign by the Little Entente, not so much against Austria as against



Hungary. Kánya had taken this opportunity of sending for the Ministers of Czechoslovakia, Rumania and (though that country was less concerned) Yugoslavia and of complaining to each in turn that such behaviour rendered quite impossible that *rapprochement* between Hungary and the Little Entente which was constantly being called for.<sup>7</sup>

BÜLOW

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<sup>7</sup> The substance of this conversation was sent to Mackensen in Budapest for comment in a despatch, II Ung. 319, of Apr. 30 (9564/E673475-82). In a letter of even date (9564/E673483) Renthe-Fink added that he himself did not consider the matter acute "since we have at present no idea how the international negotiations will develop".

## No. 297

[HOOVER LIBRARY]

*Captain Wiedemann to Obergruppenführer Reschny*

SECRET

April 25, 1936.

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

DEAR HERR RESCHNY: The Führer has been informed that in Austria resort is again being had to the formation of terrorist groups within the SA.<sup>1</sup>

The Führer most strictly forbids any such action. You are requested, as far as it is possible for you to do so, to exert influence over the Austrian SA men to this effect. Were it to be established that there exist connections between the Reich and Austria which could be associated with terrorist outrages, the Führer would be compelled to take ruthless measures against the instigators.

The Führer's attitude should be made known to the members of the Legion in a suitable manner.

With the German greeting,

WIEDEMANN  
Adjutant to the Führer

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 294 and footnote 4 thereto.

## No. 298

3175/682578-79

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy*

II M 1267 g.

BERLIN, April 27, 1936.

Received April 29.

With reference to your reports Nos. 1865 of April 9 and 1937 of April 16,<sup>1</sup> with which memoranda on conversations held in the Palazzo Chigi

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<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 274 and 282 respectively.

were submitted, I enclose herewith for your strictly confidential information a copy of a report on a conversation between Léger and Cerruti, which comes from a source which has usually proved to be very reliable.<sup>2</sup>

By order:  
RENTHE-FINK

[Enclosure]<sup>3</sup>

March 30, 1936.

In the absence of M. Flandin, M. Léger received Signor Cerruti, the Italian Ambassador, who came to inform the French Government that Signor Mussolini had stated that he was prepared to initiate an exchange of views between the French and Italian General Staffs, on condition that France made a gesture, perhaps in the form of a public declaration, in favour of the abolition of sanctions.

Signor Cerruti also thanked M. Léger for the renewed instructions issued by the French Government with the object of preventing the despatch of any French war material, aircraft, etc., to Abyssinia. Finally, he notified the Secretary General for Foreign Affairs that on the Italian side the French frontier had once again been denuded, even beyond the provisions of the Laval-Mussolini agreement, and that the French Government could therefore without anxiety employ for other purposes the forces stationed in the French Alps.

M. Léger, without committing himself, informed the Italian Ambassador that M. Flandin, who would be returning to Paris tomorrow morning, would shortly get in touch with the Italian Government in order to take up the question of negotiations between the General Staffs of the Locarno Powers.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>2</sup> In place of the last 13 words the Foreign Ministry draft (7896/E573269), which lacks the enclosure, originally read: "which emanates from the Quai D'Orsay". From a marginal note on the document cited in footnote 4 below it would appear that the report here printed as the enclosure had reached the Foreign Ministry from the Abwehr.

<sup>3</sup> The enclosure is in French in the original.

<sup>4</sup> In report 2323 of May 8 (5574/E399966) Hassell replied: "According to reliable information which I have been able to obtain here, Signor Cerruti has never been instructed to inform the French Government that Mussolini would be prepared, on condition that France made a gesture in favour of the raising of sanctions, to hold bilateral General Staff talks. The confidant of whom the enquiry was made added that only one Italian division had been transferred from the French frontier to Libya; all other troops had been left there."

## No. 299

6710/E509332-44

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

BERLIN, April 29, 1936.

Sent April 30.

e.o. II R 1173.

The Blue Book published by the British Government at the beginning of April (Misc. No. 3), "Correspondence showing the course of certain diplomatic discussions directed towards securing an European settlement, June 1934 to March 1936",<sup>1</sup> shows recent German policy in a distorted light, and is therefore apt to be misleading. The Blue Book is obviously designed to place on Germany the blame for the fact that no satisfactory settlement of the European problem has yet been reached, and tries simultaneously to give the impression that our policy had, for some time, been intent on a methodical preparation for the events of March 7. In this way it is also sought to afford the British Government an alibi for their own policy. Naturally the individual documents in the Blue Book contain nothing whose subject matter can be directly described as untrue; but, on the other hand, the whole layout of the Blue Book and the selection of the documents are extremely one-sided.

One would have thought that a collection of material of such high political import as is the Blue Book, and bearing the title of "Publication of the diplomatic discussions on an European Settlement" would contain all the documents necessary for an assessment of the political situation as a whole. However, it fails to do this. It lacks any adequate appreciation of the significance of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and the ensuing dispute between Italy and the League of Nations Powers. It is precisely these events, whose previous history goes back to the agreements reached by Laval and Mussolini in January 1935 in Rome,<sup>2</sup> which have made a satisfactory settlement of the European problem much more difficult. The Blue Book is equally silent on the subject of French efforts in London, during the period under review, to strike a bargain under which, in exchange for a helpful attitude to Britain in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, the French would obtain certain promises of British support against Germany. This exchange of views between the French and British Governments, which is of such great significance for European politics, is still, therefore, in the main withheld from public knowledge. In the same way the account given in the Blue Book of the ramifications of the Franco-Russian Pact of Alliance and its subsidiary, the Czechoslovak-Russian Pact of Alliance, is totally

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original; the reference is to Cmd. 5143 of 1936.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 405 and footnote 1 thereto.

inadequate. But it was precisely this Pact which fundamentally altered the political and military situation in Europe and which provides the key to an understanding of the German attitude. In general the Blue Book records solely what has transpired between Britain and Germany. By contrast it omits almost everything which has transpired between Britain and France, although this is indispensable for a correct assessment of the situation as a whole.

The tendency of the Blue Book to place the blame for the failure to achieve a satisfactory settlement of the European problem on Germany is particularly clearly illustrated in the Foreign Office's Memorandum of March 26, 1936 (No. 59), which was probably drafted precisely with a view to publication. In view of this it should be noted that German policy furthered all efforts apt to achieve a really lasting and constructive new order in Europe. If things have in fact turned out otherwise, Germany is in any case in no wise to blame.

In matters of detail, the following points should be noted:

### 1. *Eastern Pact.*

As the Blue Book itself admits, the German Government have by no means rejected, in principle, the idea of a really practical security agreement in the East, but have expressly stated the limits within which they could associate themselves with the idea of multilateral treaties (No. 9). Further, they have shown great willingness to cooperate in as far as they declared, on the occasion of the Stresa Conference in April 1935, that in spite of grave misgivings they were prepared not to view bilateral agreements as an obstacle to any German participation in a collective Eastern Pact, provided it fulfilled certain conditions (No. 13).<sup>3</sup> The situation as it was then has, however, been affected by two events, and this is not shown in the Blue Book: Firstly, there was passed, on April 17, 1935, that unprecedented Council resolution in Geneva,<sup>4</sup> which, after the friendly discussions (No. 10) which had taken place with the British Ministers in Berlin,<sup>5</sup> condemned Germany for having reestablished her military sovereignty, without devoting one single word to the shortcomings of other Powers in the field of disarmament. This fact is not mentioned at all in the Blue Book. Secondly, on May 2, 1935, there was concluded the Franco-Soviet Russian Treaty, which represents a military alliance directed solely against Germany and in contravention of the Covenant of the League of Nations and the Rhine Pact, and which, as such, necessarily brought to nought all plans for a collective Eastern Pact (No. 18). A military alliance of this nature was, of course, not covered by the statement we made during the Stresa Conference. To this extent the

<sup>3</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 29.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*, Editors' Note, p. 65.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 555 and 564.



conclusions drawn by M. Laval at the Stresa Conference and reproduced in No. 13 are erroneous. In our discussions with the British and the French we repeatedly drew attention to the complete change which, through no fault of ours, had occurred in the situation. This emerges in only one place in the Blue Book (No. 34). If we did not at once categorically reject any further discussions on the Eastern Pact (No. 59, paragraph 11) this was because we wished to wait and see what would be the outcome, at the proposed negotiations for an air pact, of the elucidation we envisaged of the questions raised by the Franco-Russian Pact. There was subsequently even less cause for us to adopt a definitive attitude since, in the summer of 1935, the situation appeared entirely obscure owing to the Abyssinian conflict, and since the French Government, too, allowed it to become clearly apparent that their intention was to deal with the putting into force of the Russo-French Pact in a dilatory fashion. All this the Blue Book ignores completely.

## 2. *The Air Pact.*

Germany has from the outset adopted a positive attitude with regard to the air pact (Nos. 6, 19, 21, 24). At the instance of the British, we finally even went so far as to agree to bilateral agreements, provided they were discussed jointly by all five Locarno Powers (No. 49). The opening of the discussions was prevented not by Germany's attitude, but by the difficulties made by the French. The latter, as is well known, insisted until the end of July that the points worked out between the French and the British in the London communiqué of February 3, 1935,<sup>6</sup> and particularly the Eastern Pact, should be simultaneously discussed (Nos. 34, 59, paragraph 14). After that, France did declare that she was, in principle, prepared for discussions to be opened, but she made it a condition that the Air Pact should be amplified by bilateral agreements; here the French were, of course, thinking of such an agreement between France and Britain (No. 36). On all the negotiations which took place between Britain and France on this subject the Blue Book publishes only two documents of July 1935 (Nos. 31 and 32). These, certainly, are very revealing and shed significant light on the attitude of the British Government, which had already come to an understanding with the French behind our backs on the question of bilateral agreements. From this it emerges that when the British made *démarches* to us on the subject of the air pact they did not do so in order to promote the air pact in its original form, but in order to obtain our consent to the conclusion of bilateral agreements. In this connection the British never made it clear to us that they had come to an understanding, in principle, with the French; to that extent they were playing a game which was not

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<sup>6</sup> For the text of this communiqué see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5.

"fair".<sup>7</sup> If the British had really and objectively wished to promote the air pact negotiations, the most obvious thing would have been to transmit our proposal for an air pact<sup>8</sup> to the other Locarno Powers without delay and to inform us of their own and the French proposals. But this, on a trivial pretext, they refused to do (No. 33).

As we know from the statements made by the British Ambassador here in his conversation with the Führer and Chancellor on December 13, 1935,<sup>9</sup> the British Government had in mind, for the bilateral agreements, primarily agreements with France and Belgium on the construction and use of airfields in these countries. The Blue Book is silent on this important point.

When in our conversations with the British we pointed out the practical difficulties involved, we in no way intended to reject discussions on an air pact, but merely to state that in the existing circumstances we could not see any prospect of success for them (No. 50). The British must be reminded that, as they themselves stated, the air pact would have to be concluded on the basis of the Locarno Treaty, i.e., with the inclusion of Italy (No. 36). By reason, however, of the differences which had arisen between Italy and Britain as a result of the Abyssinian conflict, negotiations with the participation of Italy were, in practice, hardly possible. The exclusion of Italy from the negotiations would have constituted an unfriendly act against Italy to which we, as a neutral Power, had no occasion to lend ourselves. Nor did the British ever give us any idea of how they, for their part, hoped to dispose of these difficulties which had arisen from their relations with Italy. Their *démarches* to us always dealt exclusively with the question of the supplementary bilateral agreements. Positive proposals which might have promoted the project in its original form were never made to us.

With regard to the limitation of air armaments, it was the British themselves who, at the time, treated the air pact and "air limitation"<sup>7</sup> as separate questions (No. 5). Moreover, we never intended to refuse to negotiate on "air limitation". Our remarks simply amounted to a factual statement that in any negotiations on the military repercussions of the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact of Alliance due consideration would have to be given to the air and that in the present circumstances negotiations seemed to be neither practical nor promising. This is not correctly brought out by the documents in the Blue Book.

### 3. *The incompatibility of the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact with the Locarno Treaty.*

From statements made by M. Flandin, the French Foreign Minister, we know that the other Locarno Powers, without, as would have been

<sup>7</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>8</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 106.

<sup>9</sup> See *ibid.*, documents Nos. 460 and 462.

"fair",<sup>7</sup> asking us to participate, consulted among themselves as to what replies (Nos. 27, 28, 29 and 30) should be given to our Memorandum of May 29, 1935 (No. 23).<sup>10</sup> Characteristically, the Blue Book contains no material on this politically significant consultation.

In numerous diplomatic conversations in connection with our Memorandum of May 25, 1935,<sup>10</sup> both during the year 1935 and subsequently, we repeatedly and emphatically stated our views as regards both the legal and the political aspect. Nor were the participating Governments left in any doubt that neither their written replies to the German Memorandum nor any other arguments put forward by them could shake the German Government in their attitude. Of this the Blue Book only records the conversation which took place on August 1, 1935, between Sir Samuel Hoare and Herr von Hoesch (No. 36) and a partially erroneous report by the British Ambassador here on his conversation with the Führer and Chancellor on December 13, 1935 (No. 46).<sup>9</sup> That was at a time when we might still presume that the negotiations on an air pact, which were intimately connected with the Locarno Treaty, would give us an opportunity for the necessary further discussions. At that time there did not appear to be any cause for any special haste, since the French had allowed to become clearly apparent their intention of postponing for the time being the putting into effect of the Franco-Russian Pact. It was only when, in the course of February 1936, it transpired that the French Government had decided to put the Franco-Russian Pact into force, that it finally became clear to the German Government that any further discussions would be pointless. The fact that as late as January 27, 1936, Mr. Eden was told by me (No. 50) that the German Government were absolutely willing to abide by the Locarno Treaty, provided that the others too abided by it in both letter and spirit, proves that our action of March 7 was not in any way prepared a long time beforehand, but only ensued in consequence of France deciding, in spite of the German representations, finally to put into effect the pact with the Soviet Union, for by this step the basis of the Locarno Treaty was destroyed and the previous political and military equilibrium between ourselves and France entirely upset.

#### 4. *The final documents in the Blue Book (Nos. 57, 58, 59).*

The Blue Book concludes by dramatically juxtaposing the conversations held between Mr. Eden and Herr von Hoesch on March 6 and 7. This juxtaposition is obviously intended to give the impression that by our action on March 7 we wantonly and perfidiously destroyed the promising possibilities of an European settlement. If the British had

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<sup>10</sup> The German Memorandum was dated May 25 but was communicated on May 29, 1935. See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 107.



really wanted to set negotiations on the air pact in train, they would surely have made their *démarche* of March 6 earlier. It is hard to believe that it was pure coincidence that this *démarche* was made on the eve of our action and that it is to be ascribed only to the desire to hasten the realization of the air pact. The urgency with which Mr. Eden insisted that the conversation with Herr von Hoesch should take place on March 6, must, on the contrary, arouse suspicion; all the more so, seeing that Herr von Hoesch expressly requested Mr. Eden to postpone their conversation until March 7, as on that day he would in any case have an important *démarche* to carry out with Mr. Eden; moreover, there appeared to be no reason why Mr. Eden could not just as well have made his disclosure the next day. Presumably, Mr. Eden in some way got to know of our forthcoming action and wanted to secure for himself an alibi to show that on the British side everything had been done to promote the negotiations for the settlement of the European problems.

You should, when opportunity occurs, express to the Foreign Office our astonishment at the one-sided and incomplete collection of documents and also make appropriate use of the other set for the points of view above. At the same time, I would point out to you that the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, in its issues Nos. 87 and 88,<sup>11</sup> has also subjected the Blue Book to criticism. I would add in confidence that we have taken the opportunity of explaining our attitude orally to Mr. Kennedy of *The Times*.<sup>12</sup>

V. NEURATH<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> This should read "88 and 89"; neither printed (6710/E509322-31).

<sup>12</sup> A. L. Kennedy, Assistant Foreign Editor of *The Times*.

<sup>13</sup> Copies of the document here printed were transmitted by Renthe-Fink for information and guidance on language to be held to all Embassies, all Legations in Europe (except that in Luxemburg), the Consulates General at Montreal and Sydney and the Consulate at Geneva by despatch II R 1173 Ang. II of Apr. 29 (6710/E509361, 348-49).

## No. 300

9588/E675973-77

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

957 I A 3

BUCHAREST, April 29, 1936.

Received May 2.

II Balk. 939 R.

Subject: Conversation with Titulescu.

Foreign Minister Titulescu received me yesterday evening in his private residence. He greeted me as an old acquaintance to whom he had talked in Ankara<sup>1</sup> on the day Germany left the League of Nations.

<sup>1</sup> Before being posted to Bucharest (cf. footnote 6 below) Fabricius had been Economic Adviser and later Counsellor at the German Embassy in Ankara.



In our ensuing conversation he repeatedly complained bitterly that he was given a bad press in Berlin and that the Government would have none of him either. In the days of Stresemann when he stood well with Berlin—he was recalling his Berlin lecture<sup>2</sup>—Moscow, though Moscow's relations with Berlin had been good in those days, had complained about him; now that he stood well with Moscow, Berlin was complaining, and yet he was still the same Titulescu. I replied that the whole political situation in Europe had, however changed meanwhile and that it was clearly recognized in Berlin that the Franco-Russian and Czechoslovak-Russian policy of pacts was directed against Germany. Thereupon Titulescu said that about three weeks ago he had made proposals for cooperation<sup>3</sup> to the Reich Foreign Minister but these had unfortunately not fallen on fertile ground. This he greatly regretted for it must be understood that Rumanian policy had one sole object in view and that was to maintain Rumania within her present frontiers. Peace was a condition existing between two wars. He could not but fear this [next] war, and he feared it particularly since it would come about between Germany and Russia. For, when the armies of these two great nations were advancing against each other, Rumania would be drawn into the maelstrom. He had, he could assure me, never admitted a Russian right of military passage through Rumania and he never would concede this. Rumania would resist the passage of any foreign troops whether German or Russian. To Rumania this would represent a grave danger. It was thus his desire, in the interests of his own country, to see relations between Berlin and Moscow improve once more and that was why he was a supporter of an Eastern Locarno.

The Little Entente had been born of fear: fear of Italy in Yugoslavia, fear of Germany in Czechoslovakia, fear of Russia in Rumania. This last was now dispelled but there was now greater fear than ever that Germany meant to embark upon something in the East, which might unleash a conflict in which Rumania might be embroiled. To safeguard this peace one could not do without collective pacts and an Eastern Locarno with guarantees, like the Western Locarno ones.

I did not fail to set forth to M. Titulescu once more our familiar views on this question.

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<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to Titulescu's lecture on "The Dynamics of Peace" delivered in the Reichstag on May 6, 1929, at the invitation of the Committee for International Discussion. On May 7 Titulescu, at that time Minister in London, was entertained to luncheon by Stresemann (then German Foreign Minister) and received by President Hindenburg. A despatch dated May 13, 1929 (K341/K113118-19) describing this visit was sent to the Legation in Bucharest.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting at this point: "He proffered his services as mediator as he has often done before. We have no need of this." No other record of such a conversation between Neurath and Titulescu has been found. Earlier approaches to this effect made by the Rumanian Minister in Berlin were recorded by Neurath on May 2, 1935 (see vol. IV of this series, document No. 64) and by Busse in a memorandum of Aug. 8, 1935 (9588/E675819-21).

He replied that what Germany was proposing was not enough. In particular the Little Entente was still anxious about the danger of an Austro-German *Anschluss*. I replied that according to the clear statements of the Führer and Chancellor the question of the *Anschluss* was in no way actual; it was also, I said, wrong to speak of a danger in this connection. Would it really be so welcome to the Little Entente for Italian influence in the Danubian region to increase?

M. Titulescu replied "No". He said he thought that Austria had only declared general conscription at Mussolini's instigation. This measure of the Austrian Government's was very disturbing to the Little Entente and they would discuss it very fully at their conference in Belgrade at the beginning of May. For after all Hungary too would go the same way if Italy so desired and such action must be prevented. On my asking what they proposed to do, M. Titulescu replied that he could not say as yet, but that this was one of the most important items on the agenda for the forthcoming session in Belgrade.

We then came to speak of the visit of the Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry, Numan Menemencioğlu,<sup>4</sup> who went on to Moscow yesterday. M. Titulescu told me that he was very angry over the Turkish *démarche* about taking action in the Dardanelles [question].<sup>5</sup> He was quite indifferent to the practical aspect of the question. For Turkey to militarize and fortify the Straits could, ultimately, only be welcome to Rumania since in case of conflict Rumania could derive no advantage from the Turkish forces in Anatolia if their common enemy were able to occupy the Straits and prevent the transport of Turkish troops to the Balkans. He was merely annoyed at Turkey's going off and acting on her own without having agreed with him the form this action should take. For it had now been made to look as if Turkey had joined the group of those countries who held revisionist views. Were he to approve of this interpretation he would be embarking on a very dangerous course. He had therefore at first declined to attend the Balkan Conference in Belgrade on May 4. It was only by reason of the conversations he had had with Numan that he had allowed himself to be prevailed upon to go to Belgrade. He would there vote in favour of accepting the Turkish proposals for fortifying the Dardanelles which, indeed, he believed were already fortified (this can scarcely be the case). As to the question of "revisionism", some formula would be found.

This much did at least emerge from M. Titulescu's statements on this subject during our conversation, that he had been extremely annoyed with Turkey, but that in consequence of his discussion with

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<sup>4</sup> During the latter part of April, Numan Menemencioğlu also visited Athens, Belgrade and Sofia on his way to Moscow. Fabricius reported a conversation with him in telegram No. 37 of Apr. 27 (7238/E531369-70).

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 277.

Numan Menemencioğlu, matters between himself and Turkey had been completely cleared up.

At the close of our conversation M. Titulescu reverted once more to our action on March 7, and said that he could not understand that Germany was not prepared to submit France's alleged breach of treaty in concluding the Franco-Russian Pact to an arbitration tribunal. He showed no appreciation of the reasons I gave him, basing myself on my official instructions. I then stressed to him the great idealistic conceptions which had induced the Führer to address his peace appeal to France. There, I said, lay the key to that reconciliation in Europe for which we were all striving.

I am to be received by the King at noon today to present my credentials.<sup>6</sup>

FABRICIUS

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<sup>6</sup> Fabricius reported on his presentation of his credentials in telegram No. 40 of Apr. 29 (9596/E676497).

## No. 301

6098/E451881-84

### *The Minister in Switzerland to the Foreign Ministry*

A 915

BERNE, April 29, 1936.

Received May 2.

II Sz. 553.

Subject: Swiss Defence Policy (Conversation with Federal Councillor Minger).

A conversation which I had today with the Swiss Minister of Defence, Federal Councillor Minger, and which I had requested on account of the German air accident near Orvin, pretty quickly turned into a conversation on Swiss defence policy in general.

Minger is a robust Bernese peasant and can be taken as the embodiment of sound common sense. For two years now he has been pursuing an energetic defence policy. He has, indeed, made use of the increased uneasiness in Europe since the beginning of 1936 to present defence estimates of 236 million Swiss francs,<sup>1</sup> that is to say as the start of an effort which is quite extraordinary for this little country.

In my conversation with Minger I had praised this new Swiss determination in respect of defence as a prerequisite for real neutrality. He replied that this hardly seemed to be the general view in Germany

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<sup>1</sup> See *Botschaft des Bundesrates an die Bundesversammlung betreffend die Verstärkung der Landesverteidigung* of Apr. 17, 1936; Weizsäcker commented upon this in report A 865 of Apr. 22 (6098/E451877-80).



and he alluded to a critical article in the *Börsen-Zeitung*. I was able to reply that the paper had not taken exception to the fact of Swiss rearmament but only to the one-sided reasons given for it.

Federal Councillor Minger then described in his usual frank manner his reasons for the new defence estimates:

The victorious Powers, he said, had at the time thought to keep Germany permanently in "the concentration camp of the Versailles Treaty". He himself had never believed this possible. It was, however, inevitable that, in breaking the shackles, Germany should create unrest in Europe. The reoccupation of the Rhineland would certainly not be her last step. What would come next, he said, was uncertain. The one thing he thought certain was that Germany, as on March 7, would not, for the time being, venture more than could be accomplished in peace. Germany's armaments were still in the middle of the build-up period and were weaker than they were reputed to be. A war today, he said, would mean the end of the Third Reich. Germany, therefore, was compelled to pursue a policy of peace for a few more years. Nevertheless, a spark might, even before then, touch off a war in Europe.

Since the German-French front line had now, as it were, become static along the frontier already in peace-time, it was only natural that the General Staffs on both sides should be studying how to outflank this line by moving through Switzerland. Equally naturally, it was Switzerland's duty so to safeguard her frontiers as to make an advance into or through her country not worth the risk for either party. Federal Councillor Minger referred to the new army units in South Baden and to fortifications allegedly being built in the Black Forest which, he said, had set some Swiss people thinking.<sup>2</sup>

Having removed all his anxieties about German designs against Switzerland, I reminded Herr Minger of the French interest in the transport of arms through Switzerland—as made apparent in Geneva last autumn—and of the precedent of economic pressure on Switzerland (1914–18) with the object of compelling that country to join the ring of Germany's enemies.

Federal Councillor Minger replied with great vigour and firmness that Germany could rest assured that any transport of arms through Switzerland or any other form of surrender of Swiss military neutrality would in no circumstances be tolerated by any quarter. Indeed, if any one party violated this principle, he would find Switzerland ranged on the side of his opponents. Annoyance with a neighbour, such as undeniably existed at the moment with Germany,<sup>3</sup> would play no part here.

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<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 99 and 116.

<sup>3</sup> For disputes arising out of embargoes on certain newspapers and from the assassination of the National Socialist Landesgruppenleiter in Switzerland, Gustloff, see vols. III and IV of this Series.



The new defence bill would serve to strengthen the faith abroad in Switzerland's absolute determination to defend her neutrality.

When I then pointed out to Herr Minger that this determination could be proved only by Switzerland's adopting a defensive posture completely equal on all fronts, he promised me most definitely that the frontier fortifications and strongpoints were being equally distributed along all frontiers. With a smile he added that the Social Democrats, normally anti-militarist, were cooperative this time because they saw Germany as the opponent. He did not care from what motives his defence bill was approved, as long as he got the money. He had laid down the strategic character of the armaments as described above.

A gratifying feature of this *exposé* by the Swiss Defence Minister is the decisive manner in which his determination to preserve absolute neutrality was manifested. Even in this conversation, however, Herr Minger did not fail to speak of avoidable events in Germany—and in Switzerland—which were inimical to the preservation of that strict neutrality. Fear of German territorial encroachments and designs, he said, was as strong as ever in Switzerland.<sup>4</sup>

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (1) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v. N[eurath], May 5." (2) "The Führer is informed. L[ammers], May 14."

## No. 302

5644/H001094-100; 103-104; 114-115

### *Final Protocol on the German-Soviet Economic Discussions of April 29, 1936*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, April 29, 1936.

#### I

The following Treaty was signed and exchanged:

Treaty on the German-Soviet exchange of goods and payments for 1936 (German-Soviet Economic Treaty for 1936).<sup>2</sup>

#### II

There were exchanged the annexed documents as set forth below:

(1) Exchange of Notes concerning the keeping of accounts on the basis of the Economic Treaty.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 214 and footnotes 7 and 8 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Enclosure 1.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5644/H001101-02). This exchange related to the special accounts to be held at five German Banks for the Soviet Delegation in respect of payments envisaged under Art. 4 of the Economic Treaty.

(2) Exchange of Notes concerning the issue of overall bills of exchange<sup>4</sup> in fulfilment of the obligation of the USSR to provide bills of exchange under paragraph 1 of Article VI of the Treaty on the placing of orders of April 9, 1935.<sup>5</sup>

(3) Note concerning the allocation of foreign exchange certificates in connection with the import of books, printed matter and stamps.<sup>6</sup>

(4) Exchange of Notes concerning the payment of the subsidiary and financing expenses requiring to be met by the German side.<sup>7</sup>

(5) Note concerning the support to be afforded to the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany in connection with the placing of orders in Germany.<sup>8</sup>

(6) Note concerning the utilization of proceeds from the sale of residues containing precious metals or of platinum in Germany.<sup>9</sup>

(7) Exchange of Notes concerning the granting of permission to the Guarantee and Credit Bank for the East to set up a revolving credit.<sup>10</sup>

Dr. HJALMAR SCHACHT

D. KANDELAKI

[Enclosure 1]

BERLIN, April 29, 1936.

Negotiations on the settlement of the mutual exchange of goods and payments for the year 1936 have taken place between the Reich Government, represented by the Reich Minister of Economics, and the Government of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics, represented by the Trade Delegate of the USSR in Germany, and have led to the following Agreement:

# I

The USSR shall pay in gold or in foreign exchange all obligations incurred by the USSR in Germany on bills of exchange made out before December 31, 1935, and falling due in the current year, and which have not yet been redeemed at the date of the conclusion of the present Agreement.

The Reich Government are, however, agreed to the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany applying such sums in Reichsmark as have

<sup>4</sup> For the German Note see enclosure 2; the Russian Note acknowledging its receipt is not printed (5644/H001105-06).

<sup>5</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 21.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (5644/H001107). This Note related to imports into Germany of these items.

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (5644/H001108-11). This exchange of Notes provided that such German liabilities might be paid in Reichsmark into the special accounts.

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (5644/H001112).

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (5644/H001113).

<sup>10</sup> For the German Note see enclosure 3; the Russian Note acknowledging its receipt is not printed (5644/H001116-18).

already been paid, or will be paid during the coming year, to them by the German Potash Syndicate Limited to meeting the obligations of the USSR referred to in the preceding paragraph.

## II

(1) The Reich Government undertake to render possible the import into Germany of the following Soviet goods, namely:

(a) pulses for fodder and as foodstuff, vetches, oilcake, vegetable oils, oil seeds, flax, hemp, flax by-products, asbestos, manganese ore, apatite, chromium ore, mineral oils, residues containing precious metals, platinum, horse hair, raw hides and skins, bristles, furs (in this connection the Soviet side will endeavour to maintain a ratio between raw products and refined products of 45:55 per cent), wood (excepting plywood which falls under Section (b) of the present Article), up to the maximum amount of Germany's actual import from the USSR in the years 1934 or 1935, plus an extra 30 per cent for each individual product.

(b) All remaining Soviet goods up to the maximum amount of German imports from the USSR in the years 1934 or 1935.

The Reich Government further declare themselves prepared, in the event of the Soviet side requesting an increase in the maxima hereby laid down for the import of individual categories of goods, to give sympathetic consideration to such requests from the Soviet side.

(2) The Reich Government will be at pains to ensure that the authorities responsible for the application of foreign exchange control shall furnish the necessary foreign exchange certificates without delay within the limits laid down above.

(3) Under the goods listed in paragraph (1) above fall only such goods as are imported into Germany directly by the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany or by the export organizations of the USSR and for which a special certificate from the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany is available. Those goods originating from Afghanistan, Mongolia and Northern and Western China, and customarily re-exported to Germany by the Soviet trade organizations, are to be treated in the same way as Soviet goods.

## III

The two Contracting Parties will endeavour to extend their mutual exchange of goods as much as possible. The USSR are agreed that the sums in Reichsmark accruing during 1936 from the Soviet exports to Germany shall be utilized for the purposes listed under Section IV. These sums must have been finally availed by February 28, 1937.

## IV

The total proceeds from the sale of Soviet goods in Germany during the year 1936, as well as all other sums in Reichsmark paid to the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany or to Soviet economic organizations by German firms, offices or private persons in meeting outstanding obligations in connection with earlier transactions or for services other than the sale of goods, shall be freely at the disposal, within Germany, of the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany for payment for goods supplied and services rendered during the year 1936, as well as for payment of financing and subsidiary expenses arising in this connexion.

Accordingly there may be paid for out of these proceeds:

(1) deliveries of goods in 1936, (2) services rendered, (3) the chartering of German shipping space, (4) railway freight charges, (5) technical assistance and installation, (6) transport, insurance, storage and acceptance commissions, (7) trade and transport commissions, (8) dues and commissions for transactions with banks and supplying or purchasing firms, (9) charges payable on bank loans, (10) price reductions, rebates and other refunds, (11) taxes, customs dues and similar dues, (12) claims prescribed by process of law together with court and lawyers' costs, (13) balancing accounts, (14) interest on the two hundred million Reichsmark credit under the Agreement of April 9, 1935.<sup>5</sup>

## V

The Reich Government declare themselves agreed that any procedure followed by German trading firms in export transactions in respect of the assimilation of prices, shall be applied to the USSR, in the same way as to other countries, in respect of cash purchases made by the USSR in Germany out of the Reichsmark proceeds referred to in paragraphs (1) and (2) of Article IV.

The Reich Government shall use their influence with the competent supervisory authorities for the purpose of enabling the price assimilation procedure to function smoothly.

## VI

It is agreed that the most favoured nation rights mutually conceded in the Soviet-German Trade and Economic Treaty of October 12, 1925,<sup>11</sup> are not affected by the present Agreement.

Dr. HJALMAR SCHACHT

D. KANDELAKI

<sup>11</sup> For the published text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1926, Pt. II, pp. 1-88; the confidential protocols and exchange of letters are filmed on L806/L235595-609.



[Enclosure 2]

BERLIN, April 29, 1936.

*The Reich and Prussian Minister of Economics to the Trade  
Delegation of the USSR in Germany*

In Article VI paragraph 1 of the German-Soviet Treaty of April 9, 1935,<sup>5</sup> on the placing of additional orders in Germany it is provided that the Soviet side, for the purpose of paying a sum of 7.5 million RM, is to make available to the banks a commission, in the form of bills of exchange, amounting to  $\frac{3}{4}$  per cent on each bill of exchange issued in respect of interest under these agreements on additional orders. To the extent that the credit of 200 million RM has not been fully exhausted by March 31, 1936, the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany shall, on March 31, 1936, in accordance with the above-cited stipulations, draw up a bill of exchange maturing on September 30, 1938, for the payment of such part of the commission as is still outstanding.

There is agreement between the Reich Government and the USSR that, of the total of 200 million RM, a sum of 35 million RM has remained unavailed by March 31, 1936. In payment of the commission, amounting to 1,312,500 RM, due in respect of this sum, the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany shall, in accordance with the Treaty, draw up a bill of exchange to the value of 1,312,500 RM, maturing on September 30, 1938. In order further to simplify the settlement of the above-mentioned Soviet liabilities, the Trade Delegation of the USSR in Germany shall issue, under today's date, in place of the separate bills of exchange in respect of interest provided for in the Treaty, the following overall bills of exchange, maturing on March 31, 1939:

3 at 1,000,000 RM

1 at 687,000 RM

5 at 500,000 RM.

With the handing over of the 10 bills of exchange herein mentioned, the USSR's obligation, arising from Article VI, paragraph 1, of the afore-mentioned Treaty of April 9, 1935, to draw up bills to a total value of 7.5 million RM shall be regarded as discharged.

The Trade Delegation of the USSR is entitled to redeem these bills of exchange prematurely at a discount rate, corresponding to the rate of interest paid by German Banks on long term deposits, but which shall not be less than 3 per cent. The Trade Delegation shall only make use of this entitlement where the sum prematurely paid amounts to not less than 2 million RM. It is agreed that the repayments may be made from the sums accruing to the Trade Delegation from the sale of Soviet goods in Germany.

By order:  
MOSSDORF

[Enclosure 3]

BERLIN, April 29, 1936.

*The Reich and Prussian Minister of Economics to the Trade  
Delegation of the USSR in Germany*

In connection with the German-Soviet Economic Treaty for 1936, signed today, it has been agreed that the permission (withdrawn on the instructions of the Berlin Foreign Exchange Office of March 17, 1936)<sup>12</sup> to the Guarantee and Credit Bank for the East ("Garkrebo"), to grant the State Bank of the USSR revolving credits up to a value of 95 million Reichsmark, shall be renewed for a lesser sum and under different conditions. I shall therefore arrange for the "Garkrebo" to be given permission for the duration of the Economic Treaty to grant the State Bank of the USSR revolving credits up to the value of 15 million Reichsmark for the purpose of financing trade within the framework of the German-Soviet Economic Treaty. It is agreed that the new revolving credit shall not be used to meet the obligations referred to in Article I of the Economic Treaty. I shall further arrange that the credits amounting to about 8 million Reichsmark previously granted by the "Garkrebo" to the State Bank and/or the Trade Delegation of the USSR may be repaid with moneys from the special accounts agreed under the terms of today's exchange of Notes,<sup>13</sup> whilst you declare yourself prepared to ensure that the credits shall be repaid within three months. I shall cause the competent foreign exchange office to issue the requisite permits as soon as possible.

It is further agreed that the holders of balances of Sperrmark, Altmark and Registermark with the "Garkrebo" shall, at present, not be permitted to dispose of these balances.

The sum of 16 million Reichsmark in Registermark, which, with the permission of the Directorate of the Reichsbank (communication No. KA 109913/33 of December 5, 1933),<sup>14</sup> was taken over by the

<sup>12</sup> Details of this decision have not been found but an excerpt (3781/E041269-72) from a letter dated Mar. 21 from Counsellor of Legation Hilger of the Embassy in Moscow to Consul Balser contains the following passage: "... At the close of the conversation M. Lewin told me that he must draw my attention to another incident which had occurred in Berlin immediately after Kandelaki's departure and which had made a very unfavourable impression in Moscow. It was a matter of the "Garkrebo" which had, for years, had the right to grant credits to the State Bank of the USSR, whose agent it was, having recently had this right countermanded by the Land Finance Office [*Landesfinanzamt*]. The action taken by the German finance authority against the "Garkrebo" had caused great displeasure in Moscow, particularly as the impression prevailed there that the intention was to apply pressure on the Berlin negotiations..." Against this passage there occurs the following marginal note in Benzler's handwriting: "Guarantee and Credit Bank for the East. No; only an isolated credit for 1933; the Russians are trying to dress it up as a 'revolving credit'. The Guarantee and Credit Bank knew as early as September of last year that it did *not* have the right currently to grant credits to the Soviet State Bank."

<sup>13</sup> See footnote 3 above.

<sup>14</sup> Not found.

"Garkrebo" and remitted to the State Bank of the USSR, shall not be included in the sum of 15 million Reichsmark for the revolving credit. This Registermark credit remitted to the State Bank of the USSR is subject to the standstill provisions with the proviso that premature repayment cannot be demanded by the German side.

It must, in accordance with the Reichsbank's communication of December 5, 1933, remain held until the year 1938.

With regard to your request for assistance in clearing the balance of the "Garkrebo", you will receive a special communication from the Reich Office for Foreign Exchange Control.

By order:  
MOSSDORF

### No. 303

M354/M017810

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

LONDON, April 30, 1936.

Received May 2.

II M 1325 g.

[Herewith] copies of

Mar. No. 409 Naval talks (already sent to the Commander in Chief of the Navy on April 29)<sup>1</sup>

Mar. No. 422 General Staff talks.

WASSNER

[Enclosure]

5577/E400733-42

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 422.

LONDON, April 29, 1936.

Subject: General Staff Talks.

While visiting the Admiralty, I had an opportunity of speaking to Admiral Troup,<sup>2</sup> the Director of the Naval Intelligence Division, and of thus also touching upon the Staff talks<sup>3</sup> (the General Staff conversations).

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (5577/E400732). In this report of Apr. 28 Wassner transmitted information from a reliable source that the Russian Ambassador in London, Maisky, had that day informed the Foreign Office that the Soviet Government had accepted the British invitation to negotiate on an Anglo-Russian Naval Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 259, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> The words "Staff talks" are used in English in the original, with the German term alongside.

These talks, as has also been reported in the press, were first conducted separately by each of the Services and were subsequently embodied in a joint protocol. The talks were of only short duration, so there may well be truth in the statement that only very general issues were discussed. The official communiqué, the terms of which reveal nothing, is known to you.<sup>4</sup>

In his statements to me Admiral Troup based his remarks on this communiqué;<sup>4</sup> he added that it had been decided to regard as "secret" the real subject matter of the talks and that therefore he was not allowed to give me any further information. He asked what possible interest Germany could have in these talks and, on my making an appropriate reply, he said that the outcome of the talks was altogether superfluous, or would be so, as long as there was no aggressive action by Germany against the other Locarno Powers.

There then ensued a fairly long conversation, on other related questions too, in connection with which it is of interest that the Admiral did not as much as mention Holland, but always referred only to Belgium and France and/or Britain.

Nor has it so far been possible to obtain any further information about the General Staff talks from other quarters of the British Navy.

From conversations with other personalities, the following also emerged:

The French very strongly pressed the British for these negotiations as being the consequence of other obligations. It was only with the utmost reluctance that the British allowed themselves to enter upon these talks at all, and consequently they adhered rigidly to the line laid down by the Government and hence entered into no kind of detailed commitments. The talks dealt only with the general deployment area, and the French are said to have proposed an extension of the Maginot Line through Belgium and to have demanded deployment preparations for a British expeditionary army on the left flank. This, however, was rejected by the British. Whereas the existing possibilities for disembarkation ports on the far side of the Channel were very lightly touched upon, the Dutch area is said not to have been dealt with at all. The meagre results are said to have annoyed the French, since they had sent such senior officers to these negotiations.

The attention of the naval observer was particularly directed to the question of whether, in the talks, a division of sea areas had really been effected in the manner reported in a French newspaper (*Excelsior* of April 9, 1936), namely, assignment of the North Sea area to the French naval forces, and maintenance of naval supremacy in the Mediterranean by British naval forces.

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<sup>4</sup> For the communiqué issued in London on Apr. 18 on the conclusion of the General Staff talks (begun Apr. 15), see *The Times* of Apr. 20, 1936.



It is generally thought that this distribution was indeed adopted for the event of the worst contingency under discussion occurring [*für den akuten Besprechungsfall*]. A thoroughly good source confirms that this was indeed so. But even if this had not perhaps been envisaged beforehand, the general politico-naval situation has already postulated such a division and furnished occasion for continuing to maintain it. This solution may also be assumed to correspond with the general British naval interests in respect of the maintenance of naval power in the Mediterranean, to which I have already invited attention in paragraph 4 of [my report] Mar. No. 338 of March 30.<sup>5</sup>

It must further be remarked that, within the framework of the talks, no attempt was made to get in touch in any way with the Soviet Russians on this subject.

The great reserve which the British showed towards the French during the Staff talks has attracted general attention. The attendance of five persons who were members of the British Cabinet or who held ministerial rank at the funeral service for the late German Ambassador in London,<sup>6</sup> which took place on the same day, has, rightly or wrongly, been regarded as underlining the fact that it is desired to avoid adopting a sharper attitude towards Germany at present. This strong representation at the funeral, so I was told in the Admiralty, has occasioned special questions on the subject.

There are clear signs that there is steadily increasing disappointment over the French attitude in the League of Nations and in dealings with Italy, with the result that the French are no longer trusted an inch, while Germany as a factor is constantly gaining in importance.

In addition, there is the fact that at present the military potential [*Einsatzmöglichkeiten*] of the British Empire has hardly emerged at all from the nadir at which it has been kept during recent years (and to which attention has been extensively drawn on various occasions in our reports).

The British Army, which suffers severely from shortage of personnel, is, according to expert opinion, certainly sound as regards individual training as far as battalion level, and, as regards equipment in case of emergency [*für den akuten Fall*], has been provided with all the necessary material. Doubts, however, are felt regarding major operations, particularly with regard to higher ranks, which the experts do not view so favourably, all the more so since the British Army is in process of rearmament. Moreover, the Army's commitment along the Suez Canal has made the concentration of adequate forces in other places practically impossible for the time being.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (5577/E400722-23).

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Leopold von Hoesch, German Ambassador in Great Britain, died on Apr. 10, 1936. His memorial service on Apr. 23 was attended by Mr. Eden, Sir John Simon, Lord Monsell, Lord Stanhope and Sir Robert Vansittart.

The development in regard to the strength of the Air Force has been much the same. In view of its present commitments in the Mediterranean, it too is probably only capable of employing very minor forces elsewhere.

There has so far been no significant change in the condition of the Navy. The political situation has further "bottled off" [*sic*]<sup>7</sup> the British Fleet in the Eastern Mediterranean, whilst leaving the Western Mediterranean exposed. This weakening of the home country which at present exists and which will be continuing for an indefinite period gives rise on the British side to an inclination towards meeting Germany halfway.

The following points may also be regarded as playing a considerable part in determining the British attitude in this case:

The British efforts to get on good terms with the United States, which have been going on for several years (and on which I have often reported in their naval context), have not evoked the desired response. A dissociation from the acute European problems can be clearly recognized; as far as the naval situation is concerned, the outcome of the naval negotiations<sup>8</sup> and the exchange of letters between Eden and Norman Davies<sup>9</sup> have produced a further weakening of the British position.

The course of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict has assumed forms different from what had previously been expected by military observers. It has become clear that the fighting spirit and energy of Italian leadership have been underestimated, and the Italians are now seen to have gained their desired objective in the space of less than a year, whereas British military circles had been predicting a campaign lasting many years. This also explains the hopes placed in the effect of sanctions and the meagre support given to the Abyssinians themselves. Instead of a weakening of Italy's position, tension has arisen in the Mediterranean, which is unwelcome to British interests and which does not permit of a reduction of Britain's forces there.

In addition, the attempts to gain Turkey's friendship (which I reported in my Mar. No. 326 of March 24, 1936)<sup>10</sup> so far show—as I have learnt from an excellent source—scarcely perceptible prospects of success; furthermore, the unrest in Palestine and the like, the exact cause of which is not yet known here (there is talk of Japanese or Russian influence), require a more vigorous exertion of British influence at this focal point of British interest (the Eastern Mediterranean), such as has already been applied in the Egyptian and Arabian areas, and

<sup>7</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 304.

<sup>9</sup> Chief United States delegate at the London Naval Conference; for this exchange of letters of Mar. 24 and 25 see *The Times* of Mar. 26, 1936.

<sup>10</sup> Not found.

has given rise to talk (which has apparently become more widespread recently) of a second, purely British (Suez), canal from Haifa to Akaba. The developments in the Far East have recently made it necessary to send back there certain naval forces which had been moved to the Red Sea in connection with the Italian affair; these developments have also caused the employment of the Australian and New Zealand forces to be more closely studied; it has also been emphasized that for mobilization purposes these forces come under the supreme command of the Admiral commanding in China. They have also caused the common military aspects of this area to be brought into accord with Dutch East Indian military interests by means of conversations between the British and Dutch Commanders in Chief.

In this connection it is worth mentioning that the propaganda against German colonial aspirations (vigorously conducted for other reasons) strongly emphasizes the strategic importance of Tanganyika (formerly German East Africa) for British mastery of the Indian Ocean as rear cover for British interests in the East. These interests appear to be increasingly menaced, especially as the Russian position in the Far East has steadily gained in strength during the last few months and has compelled the Japanese to change the direction of their development to the south—that is to say, counter to strong British interests (as has been frequently reported from this post).

It is already apparent from the points outlined above, which show Great Britain's weakened position, that Britain will continue to prefer peaceful developments in Europe and the avoidance of armed conflict, and that, in consequence, she will probably not assume too stiff an attitude towards Germany.

The conversation with Rear Admiral Troup mentioned at the beginning of this report—which, however, apart from the Staff talks, has no bearing on the statements made above—led to a lengthy and far-reaching discussion of the historico-political views developed by this Admiral, who holds an important and, in many matters, decisive post in the Admiralty. It became evident that the Admiral was completely dominated by those ideas which we find daily in *The Daily Telegraph* and, still more in the *Morning Post*. His political principles tend rather more towards those of the French, and this is evidently encouraged both by his own background and also by a report submitted to him only today by his subordinates. During this friendly conversation I had the impression that I had succeeded in a certain measure in making clear to the Admiral the fundamental differences between our points of view and in interesting him in many of our viewpoints, of which, even in their historical origins and particularly with regard to the development of the racial [*völkisch*] question, he seemed quite unaware.

It must further be mentioned that, in very general terms at present



and judging from many small indications, I have the impression that the Admiralty's attitude towards us may be called cool and reserved, if not positively unfriendly, and this, in view of the political weight which the Admiralty carries, as the experience of recent years has shown, probably reflects in general the opinion of authoritative political circles. As already often reported, the First Lord, Lord Monsell, has not adopted a hostile attitude towards Germany. His resignation, which is reported to be imminent and his succession by Sir Samuel Hoare, which is described as fairly certain, offer little prospect of an improvement.

WASSNER

[EDITORS' NOTE. Minister Kiep, leader of the German Economic Study Mission for East Asia (see vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 782), visited China in February and March, rejoining Knoll and Rosenbruch of the Reichsbank in Tokyo for the signature of the German-Manchukuo Trade Agreement of April 30, 1936 (9076/E637292-99). Thereafter Knoll and Kiep returned to Germany. A Manchukuo Trade Commissioner was appointed and took up his office in Berlin on June 26, 1936.]

## No. 304

6114/E454688

*The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 55 of May 4

VIENNA, May 4, 1936—4.45 p.m.

Received May 4—6:45 p.m.

II Oe. 1277.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

The Federal Chancellor invited me today to discuss with him in detail the possibility of a German-Austrian reconciliation. It is mainly a question of whether the Führer and Chancellor would regard it as a welcome expression of Austria's will to peace, if the Government were to decide to include representatives of the National Opposition in the Cabinet and at the same time to consult with us regarding concrete proposals for restoring relations to normal.

I respectfully request to be informed as to whether I may make my report on the conversation in person on May 9, 10 or 11.<sup>1</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 57 of May 8 (8035/E577900) Papen reported: "I learn that Starhemberg is flying to Rome on May 14, in the hope that, with Mussolini's support, he may convert the Government crisis here into a Heimwehr victory. Schuschnigg's question put to the Führer through me (my telegram No. 55 of May 4) is thus of decisive



## No. 305

9564/E673484-87

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 4, 1936.

RM 383.

II Ung. 336.

The Hungarian Minister called on me today in order, as he said, to learn in connection with the observations which he had made to the State Secretary on April 25,<sup>1</sup> what were my views on the questions raised on that occasion.

I began by asking him whether M. de Kánya had instructed him to put these questions, to which he replied with a clear affirmative, adding that on this occasion he had again been instructed by his Minister to make enquiries of me. I told M. de Sztójay that I would give him a perfectly clear answer and requested him to inform M. de Kánya of my reply in equally unambiguous terms:

There could, I said, at present be no question of concluding the pact of friendship and consultation between Germany and Hungary which the Hungarians were planning. By so doing we should only be unnecessarily strengthening the front of the Little Entente and the Western Powers and we should certainly not achieve the aim which M. de Kánya had in mind, namely advancing the Hungarian Government's prestige. Nor could there at present be any question of my paying an official return visit to Budapest. Such a gesture, too, would only help to attract unnecessary attention to us.

Upon the Minister's asking me whether I rejected altogether the idea of a pact of friendship and consultation with Hungary, I said that this was not the case. At a suitable moment it might perhaps be useful to make some such gesture although it was not, in itself, necessary. But in any case this was not an appropriate moment.

M. de Sztójay then asked if we would perhaps join the Rome Pact.<sup>2</sup> I told him that this, too, was at present out of the question. Quite apart from the fact that this Rome Pact had originally been directed

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 296.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

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importance for further developments. Professor Manacorda, coming from Mussolini yesterday, discussed in detail with me the further treatment of the Austrian question, emphasizing that Mussolini's statement [evidently during his interview with G. Ward Price of the *Daily Mail* on May 5; see document No. 315, footnote 7] that Italy was satiated was only of tactical significance and should not be misunderstood by us. I urgently request to be informed as to when I may report in person." A marginal note on this telegram reads: "Minister] v. Papen will be in Munich on Sunday [May 10]. According to information from Capt. Wiedemann he will probably report there. Th[omsen]." Professor Guido Manacorda held a chair at the University of Florence.

against Germany, our accession at this moment would, in view of the strained relations between Italy and Britain, of necessity be taken by the latter to mean that we were siding with Italy. Nor could I see any advantage to us in joining, quite apart from the fact that the still unsettled relations between Germany and Austria would also be an obstacle to Germany's acceding to the Rome Pact. The Minister appreciated this, and said that the suggestion had probably only been made because M. de Kánya thought that an understanding between Germany and Austria could come about more easily within the framework of the Rome Pact. I replied that this was surely a mistaken view. The precondition for an understanding between Germany and Austria was that different internal conditions should first of all be created in Austria. At the moment it looked as if the internal situation in Austria were approaching a crisis and as if a conflict between the leading statesmen were imminent.

M. de Sztójay then asked whether, in the event of a Danubian Conference taking place, we would support the claim Hungary would make for recognition of her rights to care for the Hungarian minorities and to pursue her revisionist aims by peaceful means, on the basis of Article 19 of the Covenant of the League of Nations.<sup>3</sup> I replied that I could not at the moment see when and on what basis a Danubian Conference could come about. Should this be the case, however, I thought I could definitely hold out to him prospects of our supporting those of Hungary's claims he had mentioned, deriving from the peace treaties.

The Minister then wanted to know whether we would be prepared to lend moral support to Hungary's demand, which she proposed to put forward at a suitable moment, for complete restoration of her equality of rights. I told M. de Sztójay that he would perhaps recall that, at the negotiations about Germany's equality of rights in Geneva in 1932, I had already demanded that Hungary and Austria be put on a par with Germany in this question and had obtained this.<sup>4</sup> In what manner we could support the practical implementation of Hungary's equality of rights would depend on the circumstances and the moment at which the declaration was made. It would, therefore, probably be useful if the Hungarian Government were to inform us beforehand of their intention and perhaps give consideration to our views as to its desirability.

In his further observations, the Minister came to speak of the possible twenty-five-year duration for the treaties offered by us, and also of the danger, from the point of view of relations with Hungary, of our

<sup>3</sup> Article 19 reads: "The Assembly may from time to time advise the reconsideration by Members of the League of treaties which have become inapplicable and the consideration of international conditions whose continuance might endanger the peace of the world."

<sup>4</sup> This evidently refers to the Five Power Declaration of Dec. 11, 1932, for the text of which see vol. I of this Series, Editors' Note, pp. 18-20.

concluding a non-aggression pact with Czechoslovakia, and he then went on to speak at length of the danger of an Eastern Pact and the difficult position in which this would place Hungary. I told him that he had no cause for anxiety. All these matters were still entirely open and the conclusion of an Eastern Pact was in the highest degree unlikely. At the moment we did not even know whether the Eastern Pact was mentioned at all in the notorious questionnaire which it was proposed to communicate to us. In any case, we had no intention of entering into any such Eastern Pact.

In conclusion the Minister asked me whether he could come to us for information on the course of the impending negotiations, and I agreed to his doing so.<sup>5</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Bülow recorded a further conversation with Sztójay on May 29 in a memorandum (3408/E013967) which reads: "The Hungarian Minister today reverted to the Hungarian intention to declare their equality of rights. The time was indeed approaching but had not yet been fixed. Kánya had however told him most definitely that he would in any case make a unilateral declaration of equality of rights before sitting down at the same table with the Little Entente Powers to discuss Danubian problems; otherwise equality of rights would be the price Hungary would have to pay for admission to any agreements. Hungary wanted, however, to attend as a Power possessing full equality of rights, and to exercise her influence without hindrance in any negotiations. Kánya had gratefully welcomed the fact that the Foreign Minister and I, with the proviso that the timing of the Hungarian declaration was acceptable to and agreed upon by us, had promised a friendly attitude. He, the Minister, had himself suggested an article in the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz* but Kánya regarded that as rather meagre and hoped, without making immediate proposals, that we would be in a position to go somewhat further. I made no comment on this last point."

<sup>6</sup> An account of this conversation was sent to Mackensen in Budapest in despatch II Ung. 336. Ang. 1 dated May 4 (9564/E673488-93) together with a covering letter (II Ung. 336 Ang. 2 of May 7 (9564/E673494) from Renthe-Fink explaining that, as Sztójay had asked the Foreign Minister for an unexpectedly early reply to the questions previously raised with the State Secretary, it had not been possible to await Mackensen's views before replying, and asking whether any light could be thrown on the reasons for the renewed Hungarian *démarche*.

## No. 306

6630/H096420-22

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 4, 1936.

Lieutenant General von Reichenau called on me today to say that he had been charged to go to China, leaving from Venice on May 29. The mission was to last six months, the purpose of his journey being to confirm Klein's China treaties<sup>1</sup> by his personal presence and to get a picture of the sincerity of the Chinese desire to implement the complex of treaties. His main task was, therefore, to cultivate relations with Chiang Kai-shek and to discuss the aims of either side with him. Since

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 270 and footnote 1 thereto.



Chiang Kai-shek spoke English,<sup>2</sup> he hoped to be able to establish personal contact without an interpreter. He gave a broad outline of the basis of the complex of treaties. He said that Reich Minister Schacht had made available a credit of 100 millions (revolving credit<sup>3</sup>); Chinese orders were already to hand for about this sum, principally for war materials and arsenals. It was now up to the Chinese to effect the payments by means of additional production and export of products useful to Germany. Not only wolfram but also other ores and other raw materials such as oil fruits were contemplated. Herr von Reichenau would not admit my objections that the entire Chinese export trade last year had been to the value of only 500 million Reichsmark and that the oil fruits came in the main from Manchuria; that rare ores could be purchased by us in only relatively small quantities and that common ores would hardly be competitive. Nor, he said, was there a danger of prices rising, since the deliveries involved were to be additional ones, i.e., new production, and the treaties stipulated that China must deliver at 10 per cent below the world market price. Lieutenant General von Reichenau told me that he had discussed his task in great detail with Field Marshal von Blomberg to whom he had explained that the rearmament of China by Germany would be a protracted business, which could not show quick results, and that it would not be compatible with a German-Japanese *rapprochement*. Herr von Blomberg had told him that a *rapprochement* with Japan was quite out of the question and that the Japanese negotiations with Herr von Ribbentrop<sup>4</sup> had been broken off.

To this I observed that the Reichswehr had heavily engaged itself in the Japanese negotiations and that in the opinion of our Ambassador it was quite impossible to break off these negotiations. I left it to him to discuss this next week with Herr von Dirksen.

I did not conceal from Herr von Reichenau that I was sceptical about the Reichswehr's enterprises in China; they recalled the earlier enterprises of Captain Lohmann.<sup>5</sup> Most of the money made available would probably be lost. Even more dangerous, however, was the disorganization and risk involved for our China trade.

In reply Herr von Reichenau emphasized that he had not sought out the task but was merely carrying out an order. As for my anxieties,

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Voss' handwriting: "No, only Madame [Chiang Kai-shek] speaks English."

<sup>3</sup> The words "revolving credit" are in English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 197 and vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 451 and 452, and Editors' Note, p. 948.

<sup>5</sup> A reference to the unauthorized use of secret funds by the head of the Naval Transport Office in the Naval Command to finance a number of enterprises which he believed would further German rearmament and provide a cover for intelligence operations. His activities became known when the Phoebus Film Company, into which he had channelled part of the funds, went bankrupt in the autumn of 1927. See also *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxxiv, document No. 156-C, Exhibit USA-41, pp. 530-607, *passim*.



the firms interested in China were after all participating in Hapro,<sup>6</sup> and that the "small businessmen" resident in China should be dissatisfied was unimportant; ultimately they would all profit from the increase in trade with China.

Herr von Reichenau then requested that he be received by the Foreign Minister next week, possibly on Monday May 11. On May 12 he had an appointment with the Führer and Chancellor. He will not be in Berlin in the meantime.<sup>7</sup>

BÜLOW

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 281.

<sup>7</sup> In a memorandum of May 11 (6680/H096423) Erdmannsdorff recorded a request from the Chief of the Economic Defence Staff in the War Ministry, Colonel Thomas, that a letter, W. Stb. 4005/36 geheim of May 6 (6680/H096424) from Blomberg to Falkenhäusen should be sent via the Embassy in Nanking. This letter read: "Our negotiations with the Chinese National Government have led to the conclusion of a large overall treaty [*Rahmenvertrag*] for an exchange of goods and raw materials between Germany and China. A Chinese special mission has conveyed to me Marshal Chiang Kai-shek's desire to discuss details of the treaty and its effects on Chinese expansion [*Aufbau*] and Chinese policy with an officer specially detailed for this purpose. I have, in the fullest accord with the Führer and Chancellor, decided to entrust this task to General von Reichenau. He will get in touch with you immediately upon arrival at the end of June to discuss details of his mission. This task stands at present in the forefront of German-Chinese collaboration. I therefore request you to support Reichenau and to do your best to further our plans. Reichenau's stay will last about 3 months. I am convinced that this will lead to a further consolidation of our relations and that your own further work will derive increasing importance from it." This letter was forwarded by Erdmannsdorff to Nanking with despatch IV Chi. 750 of May 11 (6680/H096425).

## No. 307

6987/E522262

### *Memorandum by the Head of Referat Deutschland*

BERLIN, May 4, 1936.

Reichsführer SS Himmler and Gruppenführer Heydrich urgently wish to observe the development of Communism in Spain, the methods employed there, etc.<sup>1</sup> An official is to go to Madrid for this purpose. Reichsführer Himmler requests that this official should be attached to the Embassy so that he may enjoy the protection afforded by its extra territorial status, but that he should otherwise remain as inconspicuous as possible (he should not be entered on the diplomatic list, etc.). The official is to receive strict instructions that his duties will be merely those of an observer and that he must in no way go beyond this.

The State Secretary agrees that this request of the Gestapo be complied with, but considers it highly important that the official whom it is proposed to send should remain as inconspicuous as possible.

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 221.

It has been agreed with the competent official in the Gestapo, Obersturmbannführer Müller, that he will get in touch with Counsellor of Legation Mayr direct to arrange further details.

Herewith respectfully submitted to Department I (Counsellor of Legation Mayr).<sup>2</sup>

BÜLOW-SCHWANTE

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<sup>2</sup> No further material on this matter has been found.

No. 308

6710/E509443-44

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

SECRET

No. 87 of May 4

LONDON, May 4, 1936.

Received May 5—8:40 a.m.

II R 1256.

The Polish Chargé d'Affaires today confirmed to me the information already transmitted in my airgram No. 85 of May 1,<sup>1</sup> that during his recent visit to the Foreign Office he had requested, on the instructions of his Government, that no questions which might antagonize Germany should be included in the questionnaire which it was intended to communicate to Germany.<sup>2</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires said that this *démarche* had not been very welcome to the Foreign Office; he presumed that the subsequent *démarche* by the Russian Ambassador,<sup>3</sup> who had made representations in precisely the opposite sense, had been made at the instigation of the French Government, who had been informed by the British Government of the *démarche* made by the Polish Chargé d'Affaires.

According to information which I have received from other, thoroughly reliable, sources, the original Foreign Office draft was couched in very much sharper language, but was considerably toned down during the course of various Cabinet meetings which had meanwhile taken place, the influence wielded by Lord Monsell being said to have played an important part. The latter is due to retire in the very near future and will in all probability be succeeded by Sir Samuel Hoare.<sup>4</sup>

So far nothing authentic with regard to the precise contents of the questionnaire has leaked out, and I have deliberately refrained from

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E509428-31). This telegram reported information from the British press.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432.

<sup>3</sup> Ivan Maisky.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 303.

taking soundings at the Foreign Office on this subject. It may be assumed with certainty that the Austrian question will play some part in it, but well-informed circles believe that the colonies question will not be mentioned.

BISMARCK

## No. 309

7790/E562576-83

### *Note to the British Government*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, May 4, 1936.

SK 71 geh.

[M.Att. 1009.]<sup>2</sup>

Views of the German Government on the proposal by His Britannic Majesty's Government<sup>3</sup> that a bilateral agreement be concluded on the basis of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936.<sup>4</sup>

The German Government have carefully examined the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, consisting of:

The Naval Treaty Parts I-V,

The Protocol of Signature,

The Additional Protocol,

which was communicated to them on March 26, 1936.<sup>4</sup>

The following is their attitude to the text:

1. The German Reich Government are prepared to conclude with His Britannic Majesty's Government, on the basis of the Naval Agreement signed in London on March 25, 1936, a bilateral agreement and to apply the provisions of this agreement to the ships and smaller vessels laid down after its entry into force. The consent of the German Reich Government is, however, dependent on the conditions specified under (2) to (5).

2. They are prepared to sign the new agreement even before the conclusion of a similar agreement between His Britannic Majesty's

<sup>1</sup> This document is marked: "Approved by the Führer." The archives contain two earlier undated drafts. One (7790/E562559-65) is marked "First Draft, points 4 and 6 re-drafted by order of the Führer; still lacks point 5." The second (7790/E562566-74) is marked "Intermediate Draft, not approved by the Führer in view of points 1, 6, and 8." An unsigned, undated memorandum (7790/E562521-24) is headed: "Notes for a conference with the Führer on Apr. 30, 1936." No further record of this conference has been found.

<sup>2</sup> It appears from references in documents Nos. 336 and 337 that this was the registration number under which the document here printed was despatched by M (see footnote 9 below). It was customary for all exchanges with the Naval Command and Attachés abroad to be channelled through M and in later years through the Attaché Group.

<sup>3</sup> This proposal was first made on Feb. 26; see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 589.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 304. Wassner reported the communication of the text of the Treaty in despatch Mar. No. 329 of Mar. 26, 1936 (7559/E542030) with which he enclosed the text.

Government and the USSR. They must, however, withdraw from this new agreement if the above-mentioned agreement between His Britannic Majesty's Government and the USSR has not been concluded by the time the new Anglo-German agreement enters into force. They do not insist on the foregoing reservation being embodied in the agreement as a separate provision, and consent to its being treated as confidential.

3. The German Reich Government<sup>5</sup> agree to the proposal of His Britannic Majesty's Government that the following points shall be embodied in a supplementary protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935:<sup>6</sup>

(a) A formula regarding the age of German capital ships in accordance with His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposal.

(b) A statement that the German Reich Government will continue to enjoy in future the same possibilities of construction in the quantitative field as those which existed on the conclusion of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935. Accordingly, naval vessels corresponding to those specified in Article 8(a) to (c) of the London Treaty of 1930 shall continue to be free from quantitative limitation.

4. Upon the communication of the final version of the present Treaty, the text of its Article 26 became known for the first time. This Article makes it necessary to lay down in the supplementary protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, that Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, does not affect the provisions of section 2(c) of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.

### *Reasons*

Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, expressly provides that quantitative building by a naval Power does not constitute a *change of circumstances* for the other contracting naval Powers, provided that the new vessels constructed correspond to the qualitative restrictions of the Treaty. As none of the other naval Powers are bound quantitatively, the provisions of Article 26 signify for them merely a postponement of their quantitative counter-measures until the next year's programme. In the case of Germany, however, there exist other circumstances of which account is taken in the provisions of section 2(c) of the German-British Naval Agreement, and which must continue to be taken into account. For exceptional armaments measures taken by other naval Powers signify for Germany a *change of circumstances*, even when the construction is kept within the qualitative limits prescribed by the Treaty, if it is of a character violently to disturb the balance of naval armaments.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. iv of this series, document No. 156.



5(a). In order to calculate the tonnage to which Germany is entitled, the total tonnage of the members of the British Commonwealth actually in existence at the given time must be taken as a basis, according to section 2(a) of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.

In their Memorandum of July 4, 1935,<sup>6</sup> His Britannic Majesty's Government communicated the estimated tonnage figures of the British Navy for 1942, in order that the German Reich Government might calculate the tonnage figures to which they were entitled up to and including 1942. An assurance was given in the Memorandum that alterations in the British figures would be communicated to Germany in due course. The position up to 1942 has been clarified by this agreement.

In order to facilitate the German Reich Government's drawing up of a building programme, after that date, which would be within the limits of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, and would cover a period of years—a programme which States not quantitatively limited can draw up at any time for themselves covering any period they like—it is proposed that the British Government should communicate to the German Reich Government confidentially the estimated tonnage figures for longer periods ahead, just as was done in the Memorandum of July 4, 1935.

A minimum of five years is envisaged as an appropriate period, and it is proposed that the date for the first notification of tonnage figures for the next five years shall be the year 1940. Germany will thereby, on the one hand, be able to keep precisely within the treaty ratio of 35 per cent and, on the other hand, will be in a position to utilize to the full extent at any time the tonnage to which she is entitled. Should events occur within the five years' period which would cause the British Government to modify their plans, these modifications will likewise be communicated to the German Government.

(b) As, however, the year by year distribution of the British new construction tonnage figures does not emerge from the total survey for the above-mentioned longer periods, Germany would, in consequence of the provisions of Part III of the Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, not be able to utilize possibilities of construction, which might be afforded her by a possible increase in any British annual programme, until the year following the British annual programme in question. This appears to be a disadvantage, having regard to the quantitative limitation of Germany. To compensate for this disadvantage, the German Reich Government propose the following procedure:

The German Reich Government will make the advance notification in accordance with Part III, Article 12, of the Naval Treaty of March 25,

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<sup>6</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 193, enclosure.

1936. After the annual British programme is communicated, they will examine their own annual programme, which has already been communicated, to see whether, as a consequence of the British building intentions, Germany would have the right to additional construction not comprised in the annual German programme already communicated. If the examination shows that additional construction is possible and appropriate, Germany shall have the right to notify such additional construction immediately as a supplement to the already communicated annual German programme, and to proceed to carry it out at the same time as the items of new construction contained in the annual programme.

(c) If the proposals under (a) and (b) are accepted, it is requested that a paragraph in conformity therewith be inserted in the additional protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.

6. The German Reich Government await the transmission by His Britannic Majesty's Government of the draft of such an additional protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.

7. The German Reich Government are prepared, in conformity with the assurance given in No. 15 of the Summary of Discussions of June 23, 1935,<sup>7</sup> to accede without reservation to Part IV of the London Treaty of 1930<sup>8</sup> regarding the abolition of unrestricted submarine warfare against commerce.

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With reference to their attitude to the new Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, the German Reich Government have the honour to make the following communication to His Britannic Majesty's Government regarding the construction of further German "A"-class cruisers:

Under the provisions of the Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936, a building holiday for "A"-class cruisers until 1942 inclusive has been established on the entry into force of this Treaty.

In their ship-building plans for the next few years the German Reich Government had contemplated a distribution of the relevant "A"-class cruiser tonnage over the period up to 1938. The basis upon which the said distribution was decided upon has been modified by the further developments which have occurred in the entire situation:

Germany has at the present time three "A"-class cruisers under construction. As the sole naval Power restricted in a quantitative sense, Germany must, in view of the enormous increase in armaments

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<sup>7</sup> The words "Summary of Discussions" are in English in the original; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 165.

<sup>8</sup> i.e., the International Treaty for the Limitation and Reduction of Naval Armament, signed in London on Apr. 22, 1930. For the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. cxii, pp. 65-91.

made by other naval Powers, utilize to the full, within the limits of treaty possibilities, the tonnage available to her in the categories of vessels. Until the entry into force of the new Naval Treaty, the German Reich Government possess the possibility of building 21,380 tons of the "A"-class cruiser category. They will, for the sake of the national security of the Reich and in view of the preponderance of the French navy in this category of vessel (seven French "A"-class cruisers) and of the development now in full swing of the Russian Navy, which has acquired special significance through the ratification of the Franco-Russian military alliance, lay down in deviation from their previously expressed intentions two further "A"-class cruisers this year. In return therefor they renounce the construction of the "B"-class cruiser contemplated for 1936.

The manner of the transfer of the remaining tonnage in the "A"-class cruiser category will form the subject of a later discussion between the two Governments.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> A minute by Guse, dated May 4 (7790/E562575), to the C. in C.'s Office (M), indicates that copies of this Note were to be sent to the Naval Attaché in London with instructions to communicate it to Mr. Craigie and adds: "Should Mr. Craigie put questions about the contents of the Views, he [the Naval Attaché] is to say that he is instructed to ask for any questions to be put in writing. He has no authority to answer questions. Ambassador v. Ribbentrop is acquainted with this version of the Views and agrees with it." For the actual communication of the Note, see documents Nos. 336 and 337.

## No. 310

6710/E509439

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 90 of May 5

LONDON, May 5, 1936.  
Received May 6—8:50 a.m.  
II R 1254.

During my conversation today with Leeper<sup>1</sup> (see telegram No. 89)<sup>2</sup> he told me that the questionnaire<sup>3</sup> would probably not be communicated to Germany before Thursday,<sup>4</sup> in Berlin. He, too, confirmed that it was couched in friendly terms. I replied that the Reich Government would, of course, examine the questions posed in the most careful manner and in the spirit of a continuation of Germany's policy of peace, but that it must not be assumed here in London that the Reich Government would be in a position to reply before [the] Geneva

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<sup>1</sup> Rex Leeper, Head of the News Department of the Foreign Office.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (8017/E577045-46).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313.

<sup>4</sup> i.e., May 7.

[meeting].<sup>5</sup> Leeper fully appreciated this and asked me whether, in the circumstances, Germany would be represented at all at the Council session in Geneva, to which, he understood, an invitation had been transmitted to us by the Secretary General.<sup>6</sup> I replied that I had received no information at all on this subject from Berlin.

Leeper further told me that the British Government did not for the moment intend to publish the questionnaire that was being sent to Germany.

BISMARCK

<sup>5</sup> i.e., the meeting of the League Council, scheduled for May 11.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 286.

## No. 311

6114/E454690

### *Memorandum by a Deputy Director of Department II*

BERLIN, May 6, 1936.

In accordance with instructions, I received Herr Hueber<sup>1</sup> yesterday. He said that he had wished to inform the Foreign Minister that Prince Starhemberg had assured him that, in order to conduct the joint struggle against Bolshevism successfully and in order to know which side Austria would take if a conflict should break out in Europe, he—Prince Starhemberg—was striving for an understanding with Germany and, to this end, for pacification inside Austria. Prince Starhemberg, of course, considered it important to be able to discuss these matters with an authoritative Party personality, and had, therefore, proposed a meeting with Reich Minister Göring. Reich Minister Göring had agreed to this proposal, having been authorized to do so by the Führer and Chancellor.<sup>2</sup> The meeting itself was to take place during May and was to be arranged by M. Gömbös, who had shown great interest in an understanding between Prince Starhemberg and the Party. M. Gömbös would invite Herr Göring to a shooting party in Hungary and the latter would on this occasion meet Prince Starhemberg, as it were, by chance. Prince Starhemberg had not yet informed either Mussolini or Schuschnigg of the proposed meeting. It was intended to do this shortly before Starhemberg left for the proposed meeting.

Herr Hueber requested that this information be kept most strictly secret.

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>1</sup> Presumably Franz Hüber, former Austrian Minister of Justice, a member of the Heimwehr and Göring's brother-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 90 and 246.



## No. 312

6609/E497578-79

*Memorandum by an Official of Department II*

BERLIN, May 6, 1936.

e.o. IV Ru. 1857.

At a luncheon given on May 4 by the Trade Delegate of the Soviet Union in Germany, M. Kandelaki, occasioned by the signing of the German-Soviet Economic Agreement,<sup>1</sup> the Soviet-Russian Counsellor of Embassy, Bessonov, and the Secretary of Embassy, Gnedin, spoke to me about political relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. Both members of the Embassy remarked that the Soviets had gained the impression that Reichsbank President Schacht was now once more prepared to enter into new credit negotiations.<sup>2</sup> However desirable, they said, an expansion of German-Soviet economic relations would be, in practice it was bound to be severely handicapped by the bad relations between Germany and the Soviet Union. It was absurd that two States which were interested in mutual economic relations should be campaigning against each other in the political sphere in an almost unprecedented manner. They further gave it as their personal opinion that the Soviet Government—despite increasing scepticism in Moscow—still saw a possibility of achieving a political *détente*. The British questionnaire,<sup>3</sup> as far as the Soviet Embassy were informed, gave the Reich Government an opportunity of once more expressing their attitude to the question of German-Soviet relations as well.

I replied to MM. Bessonov and Gnedin that our desire for practical cooperation with the Soviet Government was clearly apparent from our signing the Economic Agreement. We too desired a political *détente*. But, quite apart from the radio propaganda and the tone of the Soviet press, the hostile attitude adopted by the Soviet Government towards Germany over every question—and even over those questions which did not affect Moscow politically—made it very difficult for us to believe that the Russians desired an understanding. One need only refer to the attitude of the Soviet Government towards the Rhineland question, indeed towards the whole Versailles problem.

The Soviet officials did not deny this, rather they admitted that a revision of the Soviet Government's present attitude to these questions must undoubtedly be one of the pre-conditions for a *détente*. The conversation then turned to other questions.

Respectfully submitted through the D[iri]g[ent] to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff.

HENCKE

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<sup>1</sup> Of Apr. 29, see document No. 302.

<sup>2</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 489, 502, 530.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313.

## No. 313

6710/E509474

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 7, 1936.

RM 398.

II R 1269.

The British Ambassador called on me today to transmit the long-heralded British questionnaire. Those points in our Notes of March 7, 28 [*sic* 24] and 31<sup>1</sup> on which the British Government desire clarification have been incorporated in instructions to the British Ambassador here; these the latter read out to me and then gave me a copy in writing. With regard to the contents of these instructions I did not express any final opinion; instead I proposed that we should examine the individual points most carefully and then inform the Ambassador of our reply. From the way the instructions have been couched it is obvious that the British Government have been at pains to avoid all trace of asperity in their endeavours to obtain more detailed negotiations.

The British Ambassador also stated orally that his Government would at all times be ready to answer any questions we cared to ask and were actuated solely by the urgent desire to see the prospective negotiations brought to a satisfactory conclusion.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

6710/E509446-52

[Enclosure]<sup>2</sup>

No. 541

FOREIGN OFFICE, S.W.1.

6th May, 1936.

SIR:

Your Excellency will be aware that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have for some time past had under the most careful consideration the memoranda communicated to me by the late Herr von Hoesch on the 7th March, 1936, and by Herr von Ribbentrop on the 24th March and the 1st April, 1936, respecting the reoccupation of the demilitarised zone and the peace proposals of the German Government.

2. Such consideration was naturally indispensable in view of the importance which, as Your Excellency is aware, His Majesty's Government attach to the establishment in Europe of a real and lasting peace

<sup>1</sup> Documents Nos. 3, enclosure, 207 and 242 respectively.

<sup>2</sup> The enclosure is in English in the original. The questionnaire was published in the British press on May 8, and was also reprinted in the British White Paper, Cmd. 5175 of 1936.

based on the recognition of the equality of rights and independence of every State, together with respect by every State for the engagements entered into by it. It is the desire of His Majesty's Government to make every effort within their power to co-operate in the promotion of the objective described by the German Government in the memorandum of the 31st March, as "the great work of securing European peace"; and it is accordingly with this aim in view and in order to open the way to fruitful negotiation that I address to you this despatch and request Your Excellency to seek an interview with the German Chancellor. You should preface your remarks by a statement to this effect.

3. Certain of the German Government's proposals deal, as Your Excellency is aware, with temporary arrangements in the demilitarised zone pending the completion of the first stage of the general negotiations for the peace of Europe which were proposed by the German Government. On these temporary arrangements it is not my purpose to comment in the present despatch, though Your Excellency knows that His Majesty's Government regret that the German Government have not been able to make a more substantial contribution towards the re-establishment of the confidence which is such an essential preliminary to the wide negotiations which they both have in view.

4. In the course of my interview with Herr von Ribbentrop on the 2nd April, I informed His Excellency that His Majesty's Government regard the proposals for the future in the German memorandum of the 31st March (that communicated to me on the 1st April) as most important and as deserving of careful study. This study is now at an advanced stage; but His Majesty's Government find difficulty in carrying it further without discussing more closely with the German Government (as foreshadowed in the Geneva communiqué of the 10th April) a certain number of points in the three memoranda, particularly in those of the 24th and 31st March. His Majesty's Government feel sure that the German Government will share their view that the greatest possible precision is desirable before general negotiations can open, in order that in the future no misunderstandings may cloud the confident co-operation of the Powers of Europe, which it is the most earnest hope of His Majesty's Government, as they are sure also of the German Government, that the proposed negotiations may advance.

5. There are a number of passages in the German memoranda of the 24th and 31st March which leave His Majesty's Government in some doubt as to the conception held by the German Government of the basis upon which the future settlement should be founded.

6. The first point on which it is desirable to be clear is whether Germany regards herself as now in a position to conclude "genuine treaties". There are passages in the second sub-paragraph of paragraph 1 of the German Government's memorandum of the 24th March, 1936,



which seem to suggest that it is the view of the German Government that by their action in the Rhineland they have established this position. On the other hand, there are passages in paragraph 2 of the memorandum of the 24th March which might be capable of a different interpretation, which, however, His Majesty's Government would not themselves wish to draw. It is, of course, clear that negotiations for a treaty would be useless if one of the parties hereafter felt free to deny its obligation on the ground that that party was not at the time in a condition to conclude a binding treaty, and His Majesty's Government will welcome a clear declaration from the German Government to remove any uncertainty on this point.

7. If the argument set out in paragraph 6 of the German Government's memorandum of the 31st March is intended to be of general application, it might give rise to doubt as to the view which the German Government take of the continued maintenance in force of the remaining operative clauses of the Treaty of Versailles, and, indeed, of any agreement which might be said to have had its origin in the provisions of the Treaty of Versailles. His Majesty's Government do not wish to enter into controversy as to the historical interpretation of events set forth in that paragraph, and consequently they do not propose to state their views here. But they must, of course, make it clear that they are unable to accept the views put forward by the German Government in the paragraph in question.

8. There is in paragraph 4 of the memorandum of the 31st March a further cause for uncertainty. It is stated in that paragraph that "the German Government have received from the German People ('Volk') a solemn general mandate to represent the Reich and the German Nation" ('Nation') to carry out a policy which implies the preservation under all circumstances of "their freedom, their independence and at the same time their equality of status". A distinction is apparently drawn between the Reich and the German Nation. The question is really whether Germany now considers that a point has been reached at which she can signify that she recognises and intends to respect the existing territorial and political status of Europe, except in so far as this might be subsequently modified by free negotiation and agreement.

9. I turn now to other matters. Sub-paragraph 13 of paragraph 22 of the memorandum of the 31st March refers to "the conclusion of an Air Pact to supplement and reinforce these (Western European) security agreements". In the spring of 1935 the German Government were understood to hold that the negotiation of an Air Pact should not be complicated by an attempt to accompany it by an agreement for the limitation of air forces. Since then a somewhat contradictory position seems to have arisen. In the Reichstag on the 21st May, 1935, Herr Hitler mentioned the possibility of an agreement for air limitation on the basis of parity between the great Western Powers, provided, so we



understood, that the development of the Soviet air force was not such that revision would be necessary. The Chancellor's speech of the 21st May, 1935, was made after the signature of the Franco-Soviet Treaty; yet in December 1935 he informed Your Excellency that that Treaty had made air limitation impossible. A decision not to attempt to accompany a Western Air Pact by a regional agreement for limitation of air strengths would be very much regretted by His Majesty's Government; and the statement in paragraph 2 of the German memorandum that the German Government are impressed by the results achieved in the limited sphere of the recent agreement respecting naval armaments encourages them to hope that the German Government will be able to fall in with their views on this point.

10. His Majesty's Government are gratified to see that, in sub-paragraphs 10 and 14 of paragraph 22 of the memorandum of the 31st March, the German Government propose the conclusion of non-aggression pacts between Germany, on the one hand; and France, Belgium and possibly Holland on the other. They note that the German Government are willing that these pacts should be accompanied by treaties of guarantee. The exact form which these instruments will assume must be a matter for detailed negotiation.

His Majesty's Government also note the proposal in sub-paragraph 17 of paragraph 22 for non-aggression pacts between Germany and the States on Germany's south-eastern and north-eastern frontiers. His Majesty's Government would venture to recall the general outline of such pacts given to Sir John Simon by Baron von Neurath in Berlin on the 26th March, 1935. They would be glad to know whether the German Government suggest that these pacts should follow generally that outline, and whether they agree that these pacts also may be guaranteed by mutual assistance arrangements.

The announcement which the German Government have been able to make of Germany's readiness to re-enter the League of Nations permits His Majesty's Government to assume that no difficulty will arise as regards the conformity of the proposed non-aggression pacts with the obligations of members of the League of Nations, and that the operation of these pacts will take place within the framework of the Covenant.

There are two further points to which attention should be drawn. The first concerns the meaning of the words "the States on Germany's south-eastern and north-eastern frontiers". His Majesty's Government cannot but feel that the general settlement would be very greatly facilitated if the German Government could see their way to interpret these words so as to cover at least also the Soviet Union, Latvia and Estonia, as well as the States actually contiguous to Germany. In this connexion His Majesty's Government would venture to recall that in their memorandum of the 26th March, 1935, the German Government

stated their readiness to conclude pacts of non-aggression with "the Powers interested in East European questions".

The second is that of non-interference in the affairs of other States, as distinct from non-aggression against them. His Majesty's Government recall with satisfaction the Chancellor's statement in the Reichstag on the 21st May, 1935, that the German Government were "ready at any time to agree to an international arrangement which will effectively prevent and render impossible all attempts to interfere from outside in the affairs of other States."

11. In sub-paragraph 19 of paragraph 22 "Germany proposes the constitution of an international court of arbitration which shall have competence in respect of the observance of the various agreements concluded." Presumably, these agreements are those mentioned in sub-paragraphs 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 and 17 of paragraph 22. It would be desirable to know generally the functions and constitution of the proposed court and the relation which the former would bear to the functions of the Council of the League of Nations and of the Permanent Court of International Justice.

In view of the announcement of Germany's willingness to return to the League of Nations, the German Government will, no doubt, be willing to indicate their future attitude towards the Permanent Court of International Justice (particularly in relation to the Optional Clause) and towards the various provisions for arbitration, conciliation or judicial settlement contained in treaties to which Germany is a party.

12. When Your Excellency sees the Chancellor, I request that you will discuss with him the points raised in this despatch and leave with him a copy. Your Excellency should explain that these are not exhaustive. There are other matters which will have to be raised at a later date; and before the return of Germany to the League of Nations comes under discussion, the German Government will no doubt think it desirable to give some definition of the phrase "the separation of the Covenant of the League of Nations from its basis in the Treaty of Versailles setting", which occurs in sub-paragraph 18 of paragraph 22. At the moment His Majesty's Government prefer only to deal with points the elucidation of which is essential prior to the opening of the general negotiations which, as stated above, they are sincerely desirous of promoting.<sup>3</sup>

I am, with great truth and respect,

Sir,

Your Excellency's obedient Servant,

Anthony Eden.<sup>4</sup>

His Excellency

The Right Honourable

Sir Eric Phipps, G.C.M.G., C.V.O.,

etc., etc., etc.

<sup>3,4</sup> See footnotes on p. 518.

## No. 314

6710/E509543

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 7, 1936.

RM 399.

II R 1286.

The French Ambassador, who called on me on his return from a brief vacation, spent most of the time telling me about his observations on the elections in France.<sup>1</sup> The quintessence of his statements was that it ought definitely not to be assumed here that it would be impossible to come to an understanding with a Government of the Left in France. The opposite was the case, and this already emerged from the fact that the general feeling of the public in France was emphatically in favour of an understanding with Germany. Whoever found himself at the head of the French Government as a result of the elections would be bound to give due consideration to these feelings of the people. He, François-Poncet, believed indeed that the coming Government of the Left would find it easier to disregard the past than had been possible for the bourgeois Governments. For the rest, M. Poncet placed himself at our disposal if, in answering the British questionnaire, we would care to hear his view on the reception our reply would receive in French circles.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> The French general elections, held on Apr. 26 and May 2, had resulted in the coalition of Left-wing parties forming the Popular Front obtaining an absolute majority in the new Chamber.

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<sup>3</sup> On another copy (63/44190-96) there appear (amongst other minor marginalia) the following notes in Bülow's handwriting: (i) [against paragraphs 6 and 7 of the British questionnaire, which have been marked in pencil "1" and "2" respectively]: "1, 2 (The G[erman] Gov[ernment]) have not ordered the entry of German troops into this area of the G[erman] Reich in order to carry out an action for its own sake, but have seen themselves compelled to take this action in order, by it, to create for Germany the preconditions under which she can accede to a new agreement on the clear and rational organization of eternal peace. This precondition can in every age be found only in the complete equality of rights of the nations resolving to embark on such joint action."

[against paragraphs 7 and 8, which have been marked in pencil "2" and "3" respectively]: "2, 3 With the restoration of sovereignty within her Reich territory Germany has created the precondition which will enable her to conclude *such genuine treaties*."

(ii) [against paragraph 9]: "The G[erman] Gov[ernment] repeat herewith the suggestion for the conclusion of an Air Pact to supplement and reinforce these security agreements."

<sup>4</sup> There have been found in the files two commentaries (8010/E575824-29; 20-23) on the British questionnaire and two drafts for replies, one of which (63/44147-56) is headed "Draft Reply" and the other (3317/E007723-28) "*Résumé* of a reply to be given only to the British Ambassador". For instructions to Missions see document No. 317.



## No. 315

8015/E576512-14

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 67 of May 8

ROME, May 8, 1936—7:30 p.m.

• Received May 9—12:30 a.m.

III O 2280.

I had a conversation today with Aloisi about the political situation, at which, *inter alia*, I mentioned to him the *Daily Telegraph* report<sup>1</sup> about a British communication to Mussolini concerning a settlement of the Abyssinian question, and an alleged provisional reply by the Head of the Government. Aloisi stated that this report was incorrect. Such a step by the British was all the more improbable in that it must necessarily prejudice the British position in Geneva, whither he, incidentally, was going this evening. Equally incorrect was the statement in the *Œuvre* about a *démarche* by Chambrun,<sup>2</sup> who was alleged to have demanded that French interests in Abyssinia be respected. It was true, he said, that the attitude of that part of the French press which stood close to the future Government<sup>3</sup> was in no way sympathetic and was arousing distrust here. France could raise no claims other than economic ones, especially in connexion with the railway; that had once again been made perfectly clear at the Laval-Mussolini meeting.<sup>4</sup> I asked about the probable contents of tomorrow's resolution by the Fascist Grand Council and Council of Ministers, to which he replied that he could give no precise details yet; it was, however, clear that the solution could only be a total one. On this basis the definite interests of other countries which derived from earlier treaties could then be discussed. In any case it was grotesque to think that the League of Nations Powers, which had declared Italy to be the aggressor, could now demand a share of the spoils. (It must be added here that, according to information received from a reliable source, Britain has indirectly expressed a desire for the frontier with the Sudan to be rectified.)

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<sup>1</sup> Of May 7.

<sup>2</sup> It had been reported that on May 6 Chambrun, the French Ambassador in Rome, had made a *démarche* to express his Government's concern over the fate of foreign interests in Abyssinia. *L'Œuvre* of May 7 published information received from a "reliable source" according to which Mussolini was said to have promised to respect the French railway from Jibuti to Addis Ababa and the British interests in the sources of the Nile but would not undertake international obligations of any kind.

<sup>3</sup> In the French general elections, held on Apr. 26 and May 2, 1936, the Popular Front (consisting of Radicals, Socialists and Communists) secured an absolute majority in the new Chamber. The Sarraut Cabinet remained in office until June 4 when it was replaced by a new Government under Léon Blum.

<sup>4</sup> In Rome on Jan. 5-7, 1935; see vol. III of this Series, document No. 417.



Passing on to the general situation, Aloisi asked whether I already knew anything about the British questionnaire.<sup>5</sup> to which I replied that I did not. His impressions were that we would now enter a stage of lengthy discussions concerning problems pending between the principal Western Powers. Agreeing with what I had said at the conclusion of my lecture about Cavour and Bismarck,<sup>6</sup> Aloisi said that this quadripartite understanding was Mussolini's aim, and he referred to the interview with Ward Price.<sup>7</sup> A reform of the League of Nations also came under this heading. I replied that the aim he had mentioned corresponded to the policy of understanding pursued by the Führer, and that, with regard to the reform of the League of Nations, it would undoubtedly become apparent that the German and Italian views on important points ran parallel. Aloisi added that Italy was not at the present time considering the question of the actual reform in detail. Relations with Germany were in every respect satisfactory; without previous agreement, we had played into one another's hands and this would continue to be the case. I referred to the constantly renewed attempts made by French correspondents in Rome to represent Italy's good relations with Germany as a tactical device for a return to the Stresa front; this was liable to be a constant source of fresh mistrust in Germany. Aloisi described this interpretation as completely erroneous; there could, in Mussolini's opinion, be no question now of forming such a front, but, on the contrary, only of an understanding such as the one above described, i.e., with Germany.

It is interesting to note that, in the Italian reports on Mussolini's interview with Ward Price, certain sentences which appear in the German press version are missing, namely, that victory in East Africa would place Italy among the group of satisfied Powers, a fact which Britain and France should realize, and also that Italy did not want to close the door in Abyssinia to the economic enterprise of friendly States, to which number Britain and France also belonged.

HASSELL

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 313

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 161 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> On May 5, 1936, the day on which Mussolini declared the end of the war and publicly announced the Italian victory over Abyssinia, he granted an interview to G. Ward Price, Special Correspondent of the *Daily Mail*, in which he stated that he had never intended any harm whatsoever to the interests of the British Empire, nor did he have the least hankering after Egypt. The victory in East Africa, he said, put Italy into the group of "satisfied" Powers; she was ready to help in bringing about a frank and definite understanding between the Great Powers of Western Europe. The interview was published on May 6.

## No. 316

8015/E576522-24

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

2245

ROME, May 8, 1936.

Received May 9.

III O 2306.

Subject: Conversation between the King of England and the Italian Ambassador, Grandi.<sup>1</sup>

I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a memorandum by a reliable confidant about a conversation which took place about a week ago between the King of England and the Italian Ambassador in London.

I would request that the memorandum should be treated as strictly confidential.

HASSELL

[Enclosure]

ROME, May 7, 1936.

## MEMORANDUM

About a week ago an exhaustive conversation took place between the King of England and the Italian Ambassador, Grandi, at the house of a mutual friend. During this conversation the Italian Ambassador is said to have tried to give the King of England a very exhaustive account of the Italian Government's policy, emphasizing in particular that Italian policy did not in any way run counter to British interests, but was, on the other hand, determined to force the Abyssinian conflict to a conclusion even at the risk of a European war. He, Grandi, could only confirm quite unequivocally that Mussolini's determination and his decision must be regarded as his last word. But Grandi also attached extreme importance to convincing the King of England that the Italian Government wished to uphold and respect absolutely British rights and interests, as they resulted from the various protocols.

In reply the King allegedly expressed profound regret that such serious tension should have developed in Anglo-Italian relations. In his view, however, the prestige of the British Empire was not at stake in the present conflict. The British Empire, where its status and prestige were concerned, could not be identified with the policy of

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note on another copy of this covering despatch (8015/E576525): "I think this is quite likely [*Ich halte das für möglich*]. Please inform London and Paris. D[ieckhoff], May 12."

any one Government or with the Parliamentary policy of a particular period. For peace in Europe it was absolutely essential that two great nations, Germany and Italy, should be afforded full satisfaction by granting them, with full realization of their needs, the necessary colonial markets.<sup>2</sup> This should be done in such good faith as to make possible a policy of complete cooperation and complete understanding between Britain, France, Germany and Italy. The King could not say how much he had already done in this sense as Prince of Wales or what he intended to do in this sense in future. Although under the parliamentary system the government was not in the King's hands, he would continue to try to do what appeared to him to be possible and necessary. The King considered an armed conflict between Britain and Italy over Abyssinia to be absolutely out of the question. He hoped, rather, that an understanding would speedily be reached on this problem. The League of Nations, as at present organized, must, in his judgement be considered dead.

Grandi's report on his conversation with the King of England, which was sent by special courier to Rome, is said to have greatly impressed both Mussolini and Suvich, though both refrained from expressing any opinion.

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "The King has expressed this view with regard to Germany to me, too."

## No. 317

6710/E509484-97

### *Circular of the State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

URGENT

BERLIN, May 9, 1936.

II R 1277 [Ang.] I.

For information.

On May 7 the British Ambassador communicated to the Foreign Minister<sup>2</sup> the "questionnaire", of which a copy and a German translation are attached,<sup>3</sup> in the form of a copy of the instructions sent to him. After preliminary study the following may be noted concerning the content of the document:

In spite of the friendliness of their tone, the British enquiries clearly show that the British Government are desirous of causing us unilaterally to give precise and binding views on the most important problems of

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all German Embassies, all Legations in Europe (except that in Luxemburg), the Legations in Cairo, Pretoria, Quito and Teheran, the Consulates General at Montreal and Sydney and the Consulate at Geneva. Under Ang. II of May 12 (6710/E509532) copies were sent to other German Legations in South and Central America and to those in Bagdad and Kabul.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (6710/E509516-31); see document No. 313, enclosure.

European policy. In three places it is stressed that the clarification of the questions now put to us is a precondition for the start of the actual negotiations on the peace problem.

In explanation of the individual points, attention is drawn to the following:

*Opening paragraph:* Mention is here made of our Memorandum of March 7,<sup>4</sup> in which we announced the Rhineland action, of our Preliminary Reply of March 24<sup>5</sup> to the London Resolutions of the remaining Locarno Powers of March 19,<sup>6</sup> and finally of the Peace Plan of April 1.<sup>7</sup> In effect the British enquiries only relate to the latter two documents, which in themselves contain a reply to the London Resolutions of the other Powers of March 19.

*Re (2).* Obviously quite deliberately, respect for treaties which have been entered into is here added, as a third principle for the new peace settlement in Europe, to the two principles stressed by us of equality of rights and the independence of all States. Apart from this it is stressed for the first time in this paragraph that the clarification of the questions put to us is the precondition for further negotiations.

*Re (3).* It should not be concluded from the fact that the enquiries expressly leave aside the so-called interim régime in the Rhineland that the treatment of the Rhineland problem as such has decreased in importance for the British. The enquiries are supposed merely to clarify those points in our Peace Plan which have remained obscure to the British. Since our views with regard to the treatment of the Rhineland have been made known to the British quite concretely and clearly on all points, they would to this extent have had no cause for further enquiries. It is indicative of the British Government's attitude to the Rhineland problem that they again express their regret that we have not made a sufficient contribution to the restoration of confidence.

*Re (4).* The British avoid stating concrete and positive views on the concepts of our Peace Plan; in this respect they clearly wish to reserve full freedom of action and are therefore confining themselves to repeating what they have already told Herr von Ribbentrop, namely, that our Plan is most important and deserving of careful study by the British Government. Furthermore, it is here stressed for the second time that the clarification of the points now raised by the British and, indeed, as precise a clarification as possible, constitutes the precondition for the opening of general negotiations.

*Re (5).* This paragraph is merely an introduction to the actual enquiries but it indicates that it is not technical points of detail but doubts as to the basic attitude of German policy which are involved.

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<sup>4</sup> Document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 207.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 242.



*Re (6).* The first question, which is put in this paragraph, namely, whether the Reich Government will recognize treaties that they sign in the future as "genuine treaties", that is to say will recognize them to be finally binding,<sup>8</sup> is probably a concession to the familiar polemics with which the French Government replied to our Peace Plan in their Memorandum of April 8.<sup>9</sup> As the Reich Government have consistently declared that they will only conclude treaties which accord with the principles of honour and equality of rights, it is clear that they will also respect the treaties signed by them (see Point 3 of the Führer and Chancellor's Reichstag speech of May 21, 1935).<sup>10</sup> This does away with the British assumption, underlying this paragraph, that the German arguments contained in the Memorandum of March 24<sup>5</sup> would permit of our going back at a later date on treaties signed in future.

*Re (7) and (8).* Intrinsically these two paragraphs belong together. They seek to induce us bindingly to recognize those provisions of Versailles which we have not as yet expressly denounced and, indeed, the whole present status of Europe. Paragraph (7), referring to the historical observations contained in the German Peace Plan, speaks of the Versailles provisions. No explicit question is, however, put to us; it is merely stressed that the British Government reject our views. On the other hand paragraph (8) makes use of the concepts "people [*Volk*]", "Reich" and "nation", which are used interchangeably in our Peace Plan, in order to represent us as striving to combine all Germans in Europe into one State and political grouping [*Zusammenfassung*]. The British Government thus make themselves spokesmen for the familiar anxieties—in part first aroused by the propaganda of our opponents—of neighbouring States with a German population (Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria, Switzerland).

A prelude to this very precise question which Britain is now asking was the letter [*sic*] which the British Ambassador addressed to the Foreign Ministry after the Reichstag speech of May 21, 1935, with a request for an explanation of Point 2 (see the latest British Blue Book, Nos. 23 and 24 [*sic*]).<sup>11</sup> At that time we drew attention in principle to the undesirability of such attempts at precision and said that no Government would be in a position finally to lay down beforehand what their attitude would be in future to all concrete details of policy, and thus unilaterally commit themselves *vis-à-vis* other Powers, while the latter retained their complete freedom of action. With regard to the question of the recognition of the provisions of Versailles, we stated at the time that the declaration of our military sovereignty

<sup>8</sup> At this point the words "is basically only of rhetorical significance and" were deleted from the draft before despatch.

<sup>9</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.

<sup>10</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>11</sup> Cmd. 5143 of 1936; the reference should be to Nos. 22 and 25. See also vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 102 and 122.

only related to the military clauses of Versailles, but not, on the other hand, to the other provisions of the Treaty. With regard to the other provisions, however, it was necessary, in accordance with the Führer's declaration, to keep open the possibility of revision by the method of peaceful understanding in so far as such revision might prove necessary in the course of future developments. This latter reservation is now to some extent taken up and recognized by the British in the final sentence of paragraph (8).<sup>12</sup>

*Re (9).* The statements concerning the Air Pact in this paragraph are based on the version of this problem in the most recent British Blue Book and do not accord with the facts, as has already been pointed out in German press comment on the Blue Book. The proposal for a Locarno Air Pact stems from the Anglo-French Agreement of February 3, 1935,<sup>13</sup> in which a limitation of air forces within the framework of the Locarno Air Pact was not envisaged. In spite of this, we proceeded at that time from the assumption that a limitation of the air forces of the Locarno Powers would also be bound up with the Air Pact. During his visit to Berlin in March, however, the British Foreign Secretary, Sir John Simon, declared that the two questions of an Air Pact and of air disarmament would have to be separated and dealt with in two different treaties.<sup>14</sup> The German draft for an Air Pact<sup>15</sup> accordingly left aside the question of air disarmament. It is true that the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance of May 2, 1935, preceded the Reichstag speech of May 21, in which air parity with the other Locarno Powers was demanded. At that time, however, the consequences of the Russo-Franco-Czech Alliance could not yet be foreseen. The Russo-Czech Alliance was signed on May 16 and ratified on June 3 in Moscow. The visits of military delegations from Soviet Russia to Czechia, which revealed the military scope of the agreement, took place only later. It is therefore entirely understandable that at later diplomatic conversations with the British on the subject of the Air Pact we should have adopted the attitude that, in view of the change in the military situation, a limitation of air forces exclusively confined to the circle of the Locarno Powers was no longer possible. The British, without reason, have misunderstood this, taking it to mean that we considered the problem of a limitation of air forces to be entirely insoluble. In fact, however, Germany has never

<sup>12</sup> At this point a short paragraph reading: "In answering this point it must be remembered that, apart from the territorial clauses, there are still in the Treaty of Versailles a number of individual discriminatory provisions (e.g., Waterways Commission, Kiel Canal, nationality clauses etc.)", was deleted from the draft before despatch.

<sup>13</sup> The reference is to the Joint Declaration issued on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the French Republic as a result of the conversations between the British and French Ministers in London, Feb. 1-3, 1935; British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5.

<sup>14</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 555 and 564.

<sup>15</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 106, enclosure.

rejected a general air disarmament convention. In Point (9) the British now advocate a *regional* limitation of air forces, to take place simultaneously with the conclusion of an Air Pact in the West. They thus appear to expect us to agree to such air limitation without the inclusion of the Soviet Union.

*Re 10.* The first section of this paragraph relates to the Western Pact as proposed by us, without attaching any question to it. The British merely stress that the details of this pact must be left for the negotiations. It is probable that they thereby wish to indicate that the question as to what assistance obligations should be agreed in respect of which Contracting Parties still requires study. As is known, Britain and Italy were merely guarantors in the old Locarno Treaty and had no claim on assistance from the other Contracting Parties. This is, however, already envisaged in the Locarno Air Pact, as also in the exchange of Notes among the remaining Locarno Powers, which is based on the London document of March 19.<sup>6</sup>

The remaining sections of this paragraph relate to our offer of bilateral non-aggression pacts with our north-eastern and south-eastern neighbour States. They seek to expand this offer in various directions and to place it on an entirely new foundation. In the second section of paragraph (9) the British do this in the first place by referring to the paper which we gave the British Ministers during their visit to Berlin<sup>16</sup> (*Aussenpolitische Dokumente; Heft 2*, p. 90) in which we, in accordance with the political situation existing at that time and whilst rejecting all assistance obligations, declared ourselves willing to enter into a negative *regional* pact with the Powers interested in Eastern questions. In this connection, and in accordance with the situation then prevailing, we, for our part, were also thinking in terms of the participation of Latvia, Estonia and the Soviet Union, while it was only the question of the participation of France which we regarded as inopportune. On the other hand, in our latest offer there is quite clearly no mention of regional, i.e., multilateral pacts, but only of bilateral pacts.

As was to be expected, the British further put the question, at the end of Section 2, as to whether we would be agreeable to supplementing the Eastern Pacts by assistance agreements. Thus they repeat the question which Sir John Simon put to us during the Stresa Conference, and which we at that time answered in the affirmative.<sup>17</sup> The fact that the position has meanwhile been entirely changed by the Russo-French Pact receives no mention.

Intrinsically bound up with this is the demand, put forward in the next section of this paragraph, that the non-aggression pacts in the East should be concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League

<sup>16</sup> Vol. III of this Series, document No. 564, enclosure.

<sup>17</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 24 and 29.



of Nations. Thus, albeit covertly, there is raised the important problem of the relation of the Eastern Pacts to the so-called collective system, in particular the relation of the Eastern Pacts to the Western Pact, in other words the question of France's being afforded possibilities of intervening on the basis of her alliances. As is well known, this problem assumed major proportions in the French Memorandum of April 8,<sup>9</sup> to which reference has already been made, in that the French reproached us with having designed our proposed Western Pact for the sole purpose of debarring France from Eastern Europe and giving Germany a free hand in the East. If the British now point to the need to integrate the Eastern non-aggression pacts into the system of the League of Nations' Covenant, they are making plain that they, for their part too, are adhering to France's being afforded possibilities for intervention in the East. As far as the reference, made in an abstract form, to the League of Nations' Covenant is concerned, it is to be noted that, in view of the experiences of the Abyssinian war, the question of the scope [*Tragweite*] of the League Covenant can still be regarded as an open one.

The next section contains an express demand that not only Estonia and Latvia, but also the Soviet Union, be included in our Eastern non-aggression pacts. Here, too, the fact that the Soviet Union has meanwhile concluded a Treaty of Alliance with France directed against Germany receives no mention at all.

In the last section of paragraph (10) the conclusion of non-intervention pacts is once again advocated. Here the Führer's speech of May 21 is quoted, but incompletely (see point 13 of this speech). The phrases omitted are still applicable today.<sup>18</sup>

*Re (11).* Here the British put extremely detailed questions about our views on the problem of arbitration and in particular about our attitude to the Hague Court of Justice. They appear to proceed from the assumption that, with the court of arbitration proposed in our Peace Plan of March 31,<sup>7</sup> we had wished to call in question all existing institutions and agreements.<sup>19</sup>

*Re (12).* It is noticeable that here the British expressly reserve the right of raising further questions, making mention, as an example, of the question, inconvenient for all parties, of the separation of the Covenant of the League of Nations from the Versailles Treaty. They also indicate that our return to the League of Nations is still to be the subject of special discussion. This disposes of the desire frequently

<sup>18</sup> At this point the relevant passage from Hitler's speech, which was originally quoted, was deleted from the draft before despatch.

<sup>19</sup> At this point two sentences were deleted from the draft before despatch. These read: "Perhaps we can in our reply make use of the argument used by the British themselves regarding the Western Pact, that these are technical details which must be reserved for the actual negotiations. In this connection it must be remembered that the so-called Optional Clause, especially mentioned by the British, was renewed for five years by the Reich Government in February 1933."



expressed, particularly by the neutrals, that Germany should be represented at the Geneva negotiations as soon as possible, perhaps even as early as May of this year. In conclusion it is stressed once again<sup>20</sup> that clarification of the doubts Britain has raised is a precondition for the opening of the actual negotiations.

In summing up, it must be said that the whole presentation of the British enquiries and their content in detail really do not accord with the announcement in the British press that the British Government were concerned to facilitate the progress of the negotiations in every respect. Not only do the questions, in part in an unnecessary way, confront us with the most far-reaching problems, but the attitude of the other Powers remains entirely open, in particular with regard to the Rhineland question. The enquiries therefore amount to a demand for a German advance contribution of quite exceptional scope.

Through the immediate publication of the British questions the prospects of diplomatic negotiations have clearly not been improved. The reason for this unexpected step may well have been less the alleged indiscretion<sup>21</sup> than motives of internal politics, namely, the desire to divert the attention of the public from Britain's political defeat over Abyssinia.

In carrying out his *démarche*, the British Ambassador declared, on his Government's instructions, that his Government would be very willing to answer all German enquiries and to discuss individual points.

The attitude emerging from the British document shows how important it is to point out anew at each opportunity the significance both in principle and in material fact of the Russo-Franco-Czech Alliance and its repercussions on the problems of the pacification of Europe.

BÜLOW

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<sup>20</sup> At this point the words "with particular sharpness" were deleted from the draft before despatch.

<sup>21</sup> In a memorandum of May 8 (6710/E509475) Dieckhoff stated that Newton had told him that it had originally been intended to keep the text of the questionnaire secret, but that, probably as a result of indiscretions in London, the British Government had decided to publish the text that same day.

## No. 318

6710/E509548-49

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 68 of May 10

ROME, May 10, 1936—7:30 p.m.

.Received May 11—12:15 a.m.

II R 1284.

The proclamation in the Piazza Venezia of the annexation of Ethiopia and the [creation of the Italian] Empire<sup>1</sup> before a vast and enthusiastic crowd was witnessed inside the Palazzo Venezia, at Mussolini's invitation, by the Japanese Ambassador, the Brazilian Ambassador, the Austrian Minister,<sup>2</sup> all with their Military Attachés, the Albanian Minister,<sup>3</sup> the Military Attaché of the U.S.A.<sup>4</sup> (the Ambassador is away), the Austrian cavalry officers taking part in the horse trials, the German Military Mission as well as myself with my wife, Baron Plessen and the Military Attaché.<sup>5</sup> The Inspector of Cavalry, General Giubilei, gave a banquet in the Officers' Club beforehand, with short toasts, for the German Military Mission, at which Herr von Plessen, General Fischer and I were also present.

All the leading personalities of the State and of Fascism were present at the Palazzo Venezia. The meeting of the Council of Ministers beforehand was a purely formal affair and lasted only a few minutes. From conversations before and afterwards it emerged that the proclamation of the Empire was not viewed without concern by some personages. Apart from this, great enthusiasm and deep emotion, of course, prevailed.

Of those present mention should be made of Rossoni,<sup>6</sup> who had returned that morning from Germany and was telling everyone how enthusiastic and impressed he was with his journey, and who said that he was convinced of the necessity for a common policy in major matters. Grandi, who had just arrived from London and who left again at once, described the death of Herr von Hoesch<sup>7</sup> as a great loss for us, and said that the atmosphere in Britain had changed considerably to our advantage, a fact which opened up possibilities for us provided we bore in

<sup>1</sup> On the evening of May 9 Mussolini announced to the Italian people that a decree had been passed annexing Abyssinia to Italy and investing the King of Italy with the title of Emperor. On May 10 by a further decree Marshal Badoglio was appointed Viceroy and Governor General of Ethiopia.

<sup>2</sup> Yotaro Sugimura, José de P. Rodrigues Alves, and Alois Vollgruber, respectively.

<sup>3</sup> This word is queried by the cipher clerk; the Albanian Chargé d'Affaires Mark Kodheli seems to be meant.

<sup>4</sup> Col. J. G. Pillow.

<sup>5</sup> Major-General H. Fischer.

<sup>6</sup> Edmondo Rossoni, Minister of Agriculture and Forestry, spent a fortnight in Germany on an official visit.

<sup>7</sup> The German Ambassador in Great Britain had died suddenly on Apr. 10, 1936.

mind Britain's inherent inability to enter into binding commitments. Whereas Marconi,<sup>8</sup> who, as is known, has very close connexions in Britain, considers Baldwin's and Eden's days to be numbered, Grandi was more sceptical, at least with regard to Eden. In Grandi's opinion, Austen Chamberlain, after his visit to Central Europe,<sup>9</sup> is considerably more favourably disposed towards Italy and in any case his thinking is, as tradition demands, conditioned by the Locarno concept.

Mussolini repeatedly expressed to me his keen pleasure that I had witnessed this historic act. In the fairly long conversation which I had with him the day before yesterday at the horse trials, and the shorter one yesterday at the Palazzo Venezia, Mussolini gave evidence of the greatest resolution and confidence. He expressed himself in similar terms about the presentation of the British questionnaire about the Rhineland question.<sup>10</sup> Like Aloisi recently (telegram No. 67 of May 8),<sup>11</sup> Mussolini referred to Cerruti's oral reports and spoke of the increasing state of rottenness inside France, which greatly reduced her capacity for action. This applied from the aspect both of domestic politics and of demography, and recently of economic policy as well. I have made an appointment with Mussolini for . . . (group missing, presumably "the end of this week") or the beginning of next week in order to discuss the political situation, when I will also raise with him the views expressed in his interview with Ward Price.<sup>12</sup> I would suggest [that I be sent] instructions towards the end of this week,<sup>13</sup> especially with regard to the British questionnaire.

HASELL

<sup>8</sup> Guglielmo Marconi, the inventor, was President of the Italian Academy, Senator and member of the Fascist Grand Council.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 288, footnote 8.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 313.

<sup>11</sup> Document No. 315.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 315, footnote 7.

<sup>13</sup> For these instructions, sent on May 20, see document No. 339.

## No. 319

### *The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

NUREMBERG DOCUMENT 703-D

VIENNA, May 12, 1936.

CONFIDENTIAL

[Received May 13.]

A 2544

[II Oe. 1370.]<sup>1</sup>

Subject: May demonstration by the Freiheitsbund.

On my return I received the attached interesting report on the Sunday Parade of the Freiheitsbund.<sup>2</sup>

From this report it emerges that, in spite of all their efforts, the

<sup>1</sup> Taken from a copy sent to the Foreign Ministry (6079/E450969-71).

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 172.

Heimwehr could not prevent the workers' demonstration from taking place. The shouts of the demonstrators showed quite clearly that the Heimwehr imagines the Freiheitsbund to consist of camouflaged National Socialists, i.e., people who want to be reconciled with Germany.

The attached *Neuigkeitsweltblatt* report<sup>3</sup> speaks quite openly about the strong internal tensions which became publicly apparent the day before yesterday, with the possibility of a split within the camp which could hamper consolidation in the country. It would be preferred to lay the blame for the split on the *provocateurs*, but it is perfectly well known that it is a question of fundamental differences of opinion.

It is however clear that owing to Schuschnigg's participation, the Labour Movement will from now on be acknowledged as a legal movement, which the Federal Army and Police will in future consider as a comrade-in-arms against the Heimwehr, which is hated by all three.

The following event is of interest: The Czech Secretary of Legation Dohalsky offered Herr Staud (the leader of the Freiheitsbund) that the Czech Government should make available to the Freiheitsbund any desired sum of money which he might need to support him in the struggle against the Heimwehr. The only condition was that the Freiheitsbund should undertake to adopt an anti-German attitude. Herr Staud refused this demand point-blank. This in itself shows what view people in the enemy camp, too, are already taking of the new regrouping of forces.

This further shows the necessity of our continuing, as before, to support this movement financially, more particularly with a view to its continuing the fight against Jewry. I consider a sum of RM 100,000 necessary, which, if need be, should be made available in schillings, and I would ask that this be approved.

Our connection with the Freiheitsbund, especially with its leader, Staud, is already so intimate that I have been asked which personalities would be desired by the German Government in the event of Ministers from the National Opposition being included in the Cabinet.

The Starhemberg declaration (*Neues Wiener Journal*, May 9, 1936),<sup>4</sup> in which he calls for a crusade against Bolshevism and the creation of a united front from North to South, has attracted considerable attention in the foreign press. On the British side here every effort is being made to weaken Starhemberg's influence and his intimate cooperation with Italy. It may be assumed that the Foreign Office would view

<sup>3</sup> Not found; attached to a copy of this document (4939/E272319-21) in the Vienna Legation files is a clipping headed; "Neues W[iener] Tageblatt of 13.5.1936, page 4". (4939/E272322).

<sup>4</sup> Not found.



with great scepticism a possible approach by Starhemberg to the German Government.

My conversation with the Federal Chancellor will probably take place tomorrow.

V. PAPEN

[Enclosure]

#### MAY DEMONSTRATION BY THE FREIHEITSBUND ON MAY 10, 1936

As already reported, the police formally confiscated the leaflet of the Freiheitsbund<sup>5</sup> which was ready for distribution on Friday. This confiscation was the result, not so much of the protest made by the Jews, as of a protest by Starhemberg, who objected to the picture of a cock on the title page, which was a symbolic representation of the Heimatschutz. Of the 250,000 copies only 300 copies were confiscated. At 6:30 p.m. on Saturday, Staud (the leader of the Christian Social Workers' Union and of the Freiheitsbund) was summoned to Schuschnigg. The latter told Staud that, because of the above-mentioned leaflet (news-sheet of the Freiheitsbund), he [Schuschnigg] could no longer keep his promise to take part in the May demonstration. Staud told the Federal Chancellor that it was then too late to prevent the masses from being disappointed through the absence of the Federal Chancellor. He was therefore obliged to carry out the May demonstration even though the Chancellor would not be present. Since, however, tension between the Freiheitsbund and the Heimwehr had now reached an extreme pitch, the Freiheitsbund must reckon with the possibility of open conflicts, and, in order to deal with them, they must for reasons of safety, provide 20,000 armed members of the Freiheitsbund with live ammunition. The Freiheitsbund had not wished the conflict with the Heimwehr to be settled by violent means, but they need not fear such settlement either. Out of loyalty, however, he must quite openly voice the fear that, once the conflict had been settled by force of arms, the masses of the Freiheitsbund would hardly be able to understand Schuschnigg's remaining in the Cabinet any longer. In the course of further conversation, Schuschnigg withdrew his original statement and renewed his promise to be present at the demonstration. However, his appearance was made dependent on certain conditions which Staud could not decline for reasons which are given later. These conditions were:

1. An investigation of the editorship of the leaflet and possible disciplining of those responsible for it and for ridiculing the Heimatschutz (this has produced no results; on the contrary, this affair was settled Austrian fashion, i.e., without hurting anyone).

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<sup>5</sup> This leaflet (not reprinted; 4939/E272323-38) was filed with the Vienna file copy of the document here printed.

2. No arms were to be carried, with the exception of one armed company of the *Freiheitsbund*.

While the conversation was still in progress, the Federal Chancellor was suddenly rung up by Major Fey, who strongly advised him not to take part in the demonstration, because the *Heimwehr* would use violence against the *Freiheitsbund*. This resulted in a further discussion of some length on the question of whether the Federal Chancellor would or would not come. This discussion did not show Schuschnigg in a very good light, for he vacillated continuously between "yes" and "no" and between rage and fear. He then decided on the rage and the "yes".

In connexion with the course taken by the May demonstration, the following is particularly worthy of note:

At the beginning of the procession, there appeared a motor cycle with a side-car containing two officers of the *Heimwehr*, one of whom—Major Fitzner—was fairly high-ranking. The motor cycle drove at the head of the procession, with its passengers shouting, "Heil Starhemberg!". At the corner of the *Babenberger Strasse* and the *Ring* several incidents took place. A group of *Heimwehr* members, partly in uniform and partly in civilian dress, attempted to break up the procession, and shouted continuously "Heil Starhemberg!", "Nazi bandits!", "Down with the Government!", "Boo to Schuschnigg!", "Nazi dogs in disguise!", "Black Marxists!".

Suddenly Major Fey appeared on the balcony of the second floor of the house at the corner of the *Ring* and *Babenberger Strasse*. During the rest of the procession's progress there were blows exchanged at various points and many people were injured, mostly lightly, but some very seriously. Special mention should be made of the fact that Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg, quite unexpectedly and not according to the programme, suddenly left the platform and joined the procession in order to march with it.

The following train of thought was decisive for the concessions which Staud made to the Federal Chancellor:

Schuschnigg's participation in the May demonstration amounted to a legalizing of the *Freiheitsbund*. In consequence, it meant legalization of the nationalist leanings of the *Freiheitsbund*, of the struggle against Jewry and the struggle against the *Heimwehr*. Beyond this, the course of the demonstration has resulted in the official organs of the State (the Federal Army and the police) seeing in the *Freiheitsbund* a legal prop for the State, and in the *Heimwehr*, a threat to order and to the State. This all the more as the *Heimwehr* provocations forced the police to arrest 114 members of the *Heimatschutz*.

It is also worth singling out that the National Socialists, as instructed, behaved extremely intelligently and sensibly. The *Freiheitsbund*

has greatly enhanced its prestige by the technical and organizational conduct of the May demonstration brilliantly carried out under extremely favourable political conditions.

## No. 320

3412/E014111-15

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

A 113 P 3

BUDAPEST, May 12, 1936.

Received, May 15.

Pol. IV 12.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The probable reasons for Minister Sztójay's suggestions of April 30 and May 4.

With reference to your despatches II Ung. 319<sup>1</sup> and 336<sup>2</sup> of April 30 and May 4 respectively.

The *démarche* which the Hungarian Minister M. Sztójay, made with the State Secretary on April 30 [*sic* ?25], and which he repeated on the same subject on May 4 with the Foreign Minister, surprises me, particularly as only recently I took the opportunity, in a fairly long and very personal conversation with M. de Kánya, of mentioning to him that I had observed that from time to time I learned of certain matters of which, in my opinion, he was in a position to inform me, only by the roundabout channel of the [German] Foreign Ministry and that he had told me considerably less about certain questions, although they were destined for German ears, than he had conveyed to his Minister in Berlin. M. de Kánya pretended to be indignant and said that he was in the habit of informing the German Minister more fully than any other diplomat here. How this statement may be reconciled with the fact that he must immediately afterwards have despatched the instructions on which M. Sztójay was to base his *démarche* I have not yet been able to ascertain. The Foreign Minister's complex character makes one inclined to suspect that he may perhaps have believed he would have better prospects of success if M. Sztójay put his proposals direct without the other side having been prepared in advance.

Since his familiar attempt in January 1934<sup>3</sup> to bring about a consultative pact with us—an attempt which, at that time too, he made directly through M. de Masirevich<sup>4</sup>—M. de Kánya has never again raised with me personally such suggestions as he has now put forward

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 296 and footnote 7 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 305 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. II of this Series, documents Nos. 175, 192 and 216.

<sup>4</sup> Constantin de Masirevich, Hungarian Minister in Germany August, 1933–November, 1935.



in quite precise terms in Berlin. On the contrary, it has always been my impression that he regarded our views in principle on "Pactomania", which were clearly set forth to him at that time, as continuing unaltered.

If, in spite of this, he has now decided on a new step, this is probably due to a variety of reasons. First, there will be the undoubted anxiety aroused here by the prospect of a German-Czech non-aggression pact of twenty-five years' duration. M. de Kánya has never gone into this matter with me in any detail, but during each of our recent discussions he has let it be seen in one way or another how much it weighs on his mind. Even at our latest discussion, when he spoke of the visits of Kościalkowski and Chamberlain,<sup>5</sup> he asked *en passant* what was "the position over our little conversation with the Czechs", but dropped the subject when I replied that I knew nothing whatsoever of any such conversation and that in any case—and in this he would no doubt agree with me—I could hardly think that a conversation on one individual point would be in progress at a time when the whole development set in motion by the Führer's Peace Plan was still in its earliest stages. I also repeated what I had already told him on a similar occasion, namely, that in my personal opinion anyone who viewed the concept of a German-Czech non-aggression pact, of whatever duration, as something in a vacuum, or tried to separate it from the whole complex in which it belonged and which alone had given rise to it, was in error. Only the completed overall solution, as we envisaged it, would make possible an assessment of the scope and import of such a pact for Hungary too, always provided that it came into being at all.

I believe, however, particularly since similar anxiety with regard to the Czech pact has been expressed to me by other members of the Cabinet, that it may well have been the idea of such a development, which is seen here as the greatest possible danger for Hungary, and the desire to have safeguards included in it in good time, which primarily dictated M. de Kánya's present move. In comparison with this, the anxiety with which the "Belgrade-Berlin flirtation"—to use M. Kánya's frequent expression—used to be observed here, now plays only a minor rôle. The realization that friendly relations between the Reich and Yugoslavia, contrary to what was previously believed here, need not be at the expense of Hungary, has gained ground, as has the realization that a gradual improvement of the Hungarian-Yugoslav atmosphere is, after all, the essential condition for a stabilization of this country's international position as a whole.

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<sup>5</sup> The Polish Minister President, Marjan Zyndram-Kościalkowski, visited Budapest Apr. 23-26. In despatch A 100 P 31 of Apr. 30 (9566/E673784-87) Mackensen reported that Sir Austen Chamberlain, accompanied by his wife and daughter, had arrived in Budapest on Apr. 25 for a private visit to the British Minister.



A further [cause for] grave anxiety which may have contributed to M. de Kánya's present step, is the opinion generally held here—also in military circles—and which perhaps goes beyond what the facts would warrant, that, from the point of view of air strategy, Czechoslovakia should already be regarded as an integral part of the Soviet Union. So there may well be some idea of diminishing the threat which this circumstance entails and of which, since Budapest is little more than 40 km. from the frontier, the broad masses of the people are fully conscious, by inclining, in some publicly recognizable fashion, towards Czechoslovakia's northern neighbours.

Last, and probably least, may be the part played by Minister President de Gömbös' old idea, who saw a guarantee for world peace in the famous Rome-Vienna-Berlin-Warsaw-Budapest bloc;<sup>6</sup> I can well imagine that any publicly visible tie, however loose, between Budapest and Berlin would be regarded as a further advance in the realization of this idea.

On the other hand, I think it would be wrong to seek the reason for M. de Kánya's Berlin *démarche* in any doubt as to the reliability or capacity for action of his Italian friend, i.e., to try and find some such motive as that which took Schuschnigg to Prague.<sup>7</sup> Certainly the value placed here on Italian friendship for Hungary, above all by de Kánya himself, is subject to strong fluctuations. His frank criticism of the Duce's Abyssinian adventure, at one time, left nothing to be desired. But the Italians' complete military success (which incidentally was never doubted by the Chief of the General Staff, for one, here) has dispelled anxiety about the value of Italian friendship, even though political quarters are certainly not unaware that Mussolini cannot as yet devote his full attention to the Danubian region once again.

I will report in due course on M. de Kánya's reactions to the renewal of our reasoned refusal of his attempts at a *rapprochement*.

V. MACKENSEN

<sup>6</sup> See also vols. I and IV of this Series, documents Nos. 324 and 311 respectively.

<sup>7</sup> Schuschnigg visited Prague Jan. 16-17; see also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 543.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On May 12, representatives of Belgium, France and the United Kingdom met at Geneva in pursuance of the meeting of the remaining Locarno Powers on April 10 (see Editors' Note, p. 432). For the communiqué issued after their meeting, of which the French text was transmitted to the Foreign Ministry in Geneva telegram No. 38 of May 12, 1936 (6710/E509568-69), see *The Times* of May 13, 1936.]

## No. 321

115/118164

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 13, 1936.

RM 419.

During a conference on May 11 at Munich, when Minister von Papen made oral report to the Führer on the subject (on which he had reported by telegram)<sup>1</sup> of the Austrian Minister President [*sic*] Schuschnigg's efforts towards a *rapprochement*, the Führer stated that these efforts towards a *rapprochement* should be followed up, but without this being permitted to result in a definite commitment to any one of the groups in Austria fighting for supremacy there. The Führer further stated that, should a leading personage in Austria so desire, he would be prepared to make himself available for a personal discussion at a place to be agreed upon beforehand.

V. N[EURATH]

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 304 and footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 322

6710/E509576-77

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

MOST URGENT

No. 97 of May 13

LONDON, May 13, 1936.

Received May 14—8:30 a.m.

II R 1311.

For the Foreign Minister, the State Secretary and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff personally.

Wigram, whom I went to see on another matter today, read out to me Eden's telegram from Geneva on the Locarno meeting there.<sup>1</sup> According to this telegram Eden had been altogether opposed to holding such a meeting, since, in view of the fact that the German reply was still awaited, it could lead to no practical results. Boncour, however, had insisted, because it had been announced in the last Geneva communiqué<sup>2</sup> that such a meeting had been agreed upon, and that to fail to hold it might well convey a false impression to the

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 536.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 432.

public. Aloisi was then called upon to attend the meeting, but replied that he had been summoned to Rome and was therefore not in a position to do so. The meeting only lasted a few minutes, and the only business transacted was the official acceptance of the remaining Locarno Powers' resolution, which had been prepared in advance, and which was subsequently published.

We then talked briefly about the contents of the questionnaire.<sup>3</sup> I gave it to Wigram as my view that not only the contents of the individual questions and their publication, but the whole method employed was not calculated to further the purpose which both Governments desired and that therefore the criticism which had been evoked in Germany was fully justified. If, I said, this game of question and answer were to be continued we would certainly reach no positive achievements. Wigram then told me that the Führer was receiving Phipps tomorrow. He implied, whilst expressly emphasizing that it was purely his personal opinion, that the Führer might perhaps tell Phipps tomorrow that he did not wish to return a reply in writing to the British questionnaire but would prefer to see a British Minister visit Berlin and discuss the various questions. Such a desire, Wigram himself thought, would be accepted by the British.

BISMARCK

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

## No. 323

2067/449285-89

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2026

LONDON, May 13, 1936.

Received May 14.

II M 1439 g.

Subject: The Naval Attaché's conversation with Under Secretary of State Craigie.

With reference to my airgram No. 96 of May 13.<sup>1</sup>

I enclose a copy of the report on his conversation with Under Secretary of State Craigie at the Foreign Office which the Naval Attaché submitted today to the Naval Command.<sup>2</sup>

BISMARCK

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (2067/449282-84); see also footnote 8 below.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v[on] N[eurath], May 14."  
(ii) "The Führer is informed. L[ammers], May 21."

[Enclosure 1]

Mar. No. 464

LONDON, May 13, 1936.

[SK 79 geh.]<sup>3</sup>

Subject: The naval negotiations. "The German Government's Views" of May 4.<sup>4</sup> Conversation with Mr. Craigie.

Mr. Craigie asked me to call on him today in order to hand over to me the attached memorandum.<sup>5</sup> The memorandum describes the course of, and conclusions reached in, the German-British naval conversations which have been conducted since February 26, 1936, between the British Government and the German Embassy—in accordance with the prescribed instructions.

I told Mr. Craigie that I had to communicate to him the German Reich Government's Views on His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposal for the conclusion of a bilateral agreement on the basis of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936,<sup>6</sup> and I informed him of the contents of these Views.

It was apparent from his remarks on the subject that he had no objections to make to the individual points of these "Views".

As to Russian signature, he thought, moreover, that since the matter was, after all, to be dealt with confidentially, he could promise that the matter would be treated in the manner desired.

With regard to submarine warfare, he said that during negotiations with the other Powers technical difficulties had arisen in that the Japanese in particular did not wish to refer back to the London Treaty when the provisions relating to the abolition of submarine warfare were being laid down. It was intended to propose a special convention for the Washington Powers and then to propose to the other Powers that they accede to it. Germany would then be kept currently informed by him as to how the matter was progressing. In his opinion it would be extremely advantageous if Germany's official accession could take place immediately after the proposal was submitted; this would make a particularly good impression as the act of a non-Washington Power.

Mr. Craigie was exceedingly agitated by the information of Germany's intention to build more German "A"-class cruisers. He told me that our announced intention would render the whole Naval Treaty void.

<sup>3</sup> Taken from the copy in the naval files (7790/E562587-96) which has copies of the following marginal notes, which are stated to be by Raeder:

(a) "For Britain!"  
 (b) "35%!"  
 (c) "From Jan. 1, 1937."  
 (d) "?"  
 (e) "But [it is known] to us!!"

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>5</sup> See enclosure 2.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 304.



The greatest success<sup>3a</sup> of the whole Naval Treaty was the building holiday for "A"-class cruisers.

It had been only with much difficulty that, in the most recent negotiations, the other Powers had been induced to accept this building holiday for cruisers, whereby France had been limited to seven cruisers. It would be hard enough to make the three German "A"-class cruisers sufficiently plausible<sup>3b</sup> as not to lead to an immediate resumption of cruiser construction by the French or other Powers. The building of five such cruisers must clearly result in other countries immediately going back on their decisions and thus lead to a race in the construction of these cruisers.

Moreover, the measure announced to him contradicted not only the data given in the 1935 naval negotiations but also the data given in the German Memorandum of February 26, 1936,<sup>7</sup> that is to say hardly two months ago, in which the German Government had expressly set forth that they accepted of the building holiday for "A"-class cruisers.<sup>3c</sup> At this point he drew particular attention to paragraph 10<sup>3d</sup> of his memorandum, which expressly referred to these circumstances.

He further stated that there had been no changes in the building of cruisers by other Powers which might have placed Germany at a further disadvantage and nothing was as yet known about Russian construction.<sup>3e</sup>

He must expressly point out that the making known of this German intention would be bound to have the most serious effects on world naval armaments and would create the most unfavourable impression imaginable of Germany.

If the German Government believed themselves compelled for reasons of national security to take such steps, he thought it would be better if the announcement could perhaps be made in the form that, should the building holiday not be observed by the other Powers, Germany must reserve the right to use the tonnage allocated her for such cruisers.

Mr. Craigie, with whom the conversation was extremely friendly, was most disturbed by the German intention and he repeatedly stressed what extremely serious and telling effects these German measures must have on world naval construction. He asked me, before he finally accepted the German Views from me and therefore had to inform the British authorities, to examine once more his personal very grave objections to our intention.

I would further remark that, according to instructions, I did not give any particular explanation of the statements in the "Views".

Before, therefore, finally handing over the German Government's Views I consider it right to draw attention to the serious objections

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<sup>7</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 585.

expressed by Mr. Craigie, and I would request orders as to whether I am still to hand the Views over unaltered and in the manner as previously instructed.

WASSNER

[P.S.] Note. Prince Bismarck has just been requested to call upon Under Secretary of State Craigie on the same matter. He will report on this separately.<sup>8</sup>

WASSNER

[Enclosure 2]<sup>9</sup>

# MEMORANDUM

On the 26th February last, the late German Ambassador communicated to His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom a memorandum stating that the German Government were in principle prepared to agree to the suggestion of His Majesty's Government that Germany should accede to the multilateral naval treaty which it was hoped to conclude on the basis of certain texts which had been communicated to the German Embassy on the 12th February. The memorandum, besides dealing with a number of technical points, made it clear that Germany's acceptance of a multilateral naval treaty must be dependent on (a) the treaty being operative in the same manner for all signatory States [*sic*], and (b) the principal maritime Powers, and especially the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, being parties to it.

2. At the interview which took place on the same day ([ ] February 26th) the Secretary of State of Foreign Affairs and the First Lord of the Admiralty informed the German Ambassador that developments had in the meanwhile occurred which unfortunately necessitated some change in the procedure originally contemplated, i.e. the signature in London of a naval treaty which would be open to accession by all other naval Powers. In the circumstances it had been decided to restrict participation in the proposed naval treaty to the Washington and London Naval Treaty Powers. The ultimate objective would still be the conclusion of a general treaty between all the naval Powers, but, as this must necessarily take time, Mr. Eden enquired whether the German Government would meanwhile be prepared to enter into a bilateral agreement with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom which would apply, as between themselves, the provisions of the treaty to be concluded between the Powers represented at the Naval Conference. Herr von Hoesch undertook to ascertain the view of his Government on this proposal.

3. Conversations subsequently took place between the German Ambassador and the First Lord of the Admiralty in regard to the point

<sup>8</sup> Bismarck reported on this interview in the document cited in footnote 1 above.

<sup>9</sup> The original of this enclosure is in English.

mentioned in Section III of the German memorandum of February 26th, namely the objection to Germany being bound, *vis-à-vis* the United Kingdom, to a twenty-six-year life for capital ships, seeing that all other naval Powers would henceforth be at liberty to replace their capital ships at an age less than twenty-six years. The validity of this argument was recognised by His Majesty's Government, who proposed to the German Government a settlement of this difficulty on the basis of the following formula:

It is agreed that the normal life of a capital ship should be twenty-six years. If, however, when the German capital ships now building or projected are approaching the age of twenty years, the German Government represent that a Power has laid down a capital ship before the date at which such ship would normally be laid down in replacement of its existing capital ship tonnage, and in consequence the retention of some or all of the German ships to the age of twenty-six years is an unfair restriction, no objection would be raised to their replacement at any age not less than twenty years.

4. The answer of the German Government to the above Proposals, which was conveyed orally to the Foreign Office by the German Embassy on March 9th, was to the following effect:

1. The German Government agree with the proposal made to them by the United Kingdom Delegation in regard to age limits for the capital ship.

2. The German Government are prepared, in view of the text in the safeguarding clauses which has been communicated to them, to sign the proposed bilateral agreement, but they nevertheless aks [*sic*] that the entry into force of the proposed treaty should be subject to the signature of a similar Anglo-Russian Pact.

3. The new Anglo-German Treaty would come into force on the 1st January, 1937.

4. It is suggested that six years would be a desirable period of validity.

5. The German Government consider that an exchange of notes would be an adequate method of concluding the agreement.

6. The German Government assume that they will shortly receive a draft of the proposed treaty in its final form.

5. With this communication it became clear that no substantial difficulty remained in the way of the conclusion of the proposed bilateral naval agreement, apart from the German reservation in regard to the conclusion of a similar Anglo-Russian Pact—a reservation which might have inconvenient consequences in the event of the Soviet Government not being prepared to enter into a bilateral naval agreement with this country on the basis proposed. The earnest hope was



expressed by His Majesty's Government that the German Government might see their way to waive this reservation and, in dealing with any exceptional constructions by Powers not party to any naval treaty, to rely on the ample facilities provided by the safeguarding clauses embodied in the London Naval Treaty, 1936.

6. It is *[sic]* the purpose of the present memorandum, having thus briefly outlined the course of recent negotiations, to indicate the view of His Majesty's Government on some of the supplementary points raised in the German memorandum of February 26th and in the communication of March 9th.

7. Heading (1) of the memorandum of February 26th:

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree with the view of the German Government that Article III of the "Draft Text of a Treaty prepared by the Technical Sub-Committee on Advance Notification and Exchange of Information" and Article III (c) of the Supplementary Report, a revised wording of both of which texts has been incorporated in Article 14 of the Treaty as signed, do not conflict with Article VI of the 13th Convention of the Second Hague Conference of the 18th October, 1907, regarding the rights and duties of neutrals in the event of maritime warfare. In other words, His Majesty's Government regard Article 14 of the Treaty as only applying to the acquisition of naval vessels from abroad in so far as such acquisition is legitimate and therefore not in conflict with the Hague Convention.

8. Heading (2) in the memorandum of February 26th:

His Majesty's Government agree that the acceptance of new definitions for War Vessels cannot affect the scope of the 35% ratio agreement as defined in Sir Samuel Hoare's Note dated 18th June, 1935, and as elaborated in the negotiations which were terminated by the German Government's note dated 19th February, 1936. They therefore concur that the Types of ship to which the 35% ratio does not apply remain as defined in Article 8 of the London Naval Treaty of 1930.

9. The question of the age limits of capital ships, which was also raised in this section of the German memorandum, has been dealt with in paragraph 3 above. It is, of course, understood that the United Kingdom would have the same liberty as the German Government to replace capital ships at any age not less than twenty years in the circumstances mentioned in the formula. It may therefore be desirable at a later stage to recast the formula so as to make it clear that the right to earlier replacement in the circumstances defined is a reciprocal one.

10. Under Heading (3) of the memorandum of February 26th, the German Government expressed their agreement in principle with the lowest qualitative limits on which there appeared at that time to be a prospect of general agreement. As these proposed qualitative limits have been, with certain modifications, embodied in Part II of the new treaty, they trust that the qualitative limitations as now stated in the



Treaty are acceptable ot[sic] the German Government. His Majesty's Government note in particular that the German Government are ready to accept a building holiday in Category A cruisers, namely cruisers carrying a gun above 6.1 inches in calibre. They hope that they are correct in inferring that a similar decision applies to other types of light surface vessels of war whose construction is not permitted within the duration of the present treaty, namely to those vessels which, while not mounting a gun exceeding 6.1 inches in calibre, have a standard displacement exceeding 8,000 tons.

11. Points 3-5 of the communication from the German Embassy of March 9th:

His Majesty's Government agree that the proposed Anglo-German Naval Agreement should come into force on the 1st January, 1937 (or on such later date as the London Naval Treaty, 1936, may come into force) and that six years would be a desirable period of validity. They also agree that an exchange of notes would be an adequate method of concluding the agreement.

FOREIGN OFFICE,  
13th May, 1936.

## No. 324

8063/E579199-201

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 72 of May 14

ROME, May 14, 1936—7:40 p.m.

Received May 14—9:40 p.m.

Pol.I 32.

Suvich told me today that Italy's departure from Geneva was inevitable now that the procedure of the Italian representatives in alternately entering and leaving<sup>1</sup> could no longer be tolerated, being both undignified and unsatisfactory. An additional motive for their departure is described to me by a well-informed source as being Italy's desire to avoid a Locarno meeting. Suvich interpreted the departure as ceasing to cooperate further as long as the present conditions prevailed; the measure should not be regarded as a first step towards withdrawal, but withdrawal might well be the next step if on June 15<sup>2</sup> the situation was still basically the same. In the Italian view the right

<sup>1</sup> In protest against the admission of the Abyssinian representative, Wolde Mariam, to the first secret meeting of the 92nd Session of the League of Nations Council on May 11, Baron Aloisi and the whole Italian Delegation left the room but reappeared to take part in the subsequent public meeting. On May 12 the Italian Delegation was recalled from Geneva; see also document No. 322.

<sup>2</sup> On May 12, 1936, the League of Nations Council passed a resolution to the effect that discussion of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict should be resumed on June 15, 1936.

thing would be for the Committee of Eighteen<sup>3</sup> to meet in the meantime and for them to draw the inevitable conclusions from the new situation and remove sanctions. In this respect Suvich obviously regarded the situation without undue optimism. He confirmed that people in Britain were increasingly in favour of sanctions;<sup>4</sup> apart from this, he considered the main difficulty to be the Italian demand that the League of Nations should delete [the name of] Abyssinia as an independent State and, consequently, as a member of the League of Nations. While Italy, he said, had to be inexorable in this demand, it could not be denied that this was expecting a great deal of the League of Nations, psychologically in particular.

Suvich expressly confirmed to me that Chambrun in Rome<sup>5</sup> and Flandin in Paris had, before the proclamation,<sup>6</sup> expressed the urgent desire that Italy should ease the situation by practising moderation; indisputably the solution actually adopted did not correspond with French desires. He, like the Head of the Government, condemned the press attack<sup>7</sup> on the alleged tortuousness and insincerity of a certain diplomat, which had undoubtedly referred to Chambrun, since Chambrun had only acted on instructions. The future French attitude could not yet be foreseen. The Soviets were now in favour of abolishing sanctions, obviously because no sanctions had been applied against Germany. Litvinov had always taken the view that he would like nothing better than direct successful negotiations between Italy and the Negus, which could then be presented to the League of Nations. He, Suvich, had now tried to make it clear to Ambassador Stein<sup>8</sup> that it was not Italy's fault if her willingness to do this had not led to any practical result and if the other party to such direct negotiations had now disappeared; Soviet Russia ought, therefore, precisely on her own showing, now to declare herself satisfied with the situation which had arisen as a result of the Negus' flight.<sup>9</sup>

Suvich then referred to the Cabinet reshuffle in Austria,<sup>10</sup> which could be attributed in the last analysis to the fact that its previous composition had inevitably caused constant friction. A decision had now clearly been made in favour of Schuschnigg's leadership, but this,

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the smaller Committee appointed by the Coordinating Committee set up by the League Assembly on Oct. 10, 1935, to coordinate measures for the application of sanctions under Article 16 of the Covenant.

<sup>4</sup> The question of sanctions was debated in the House of Commons on May 6 (see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 311, cols. 1713-1842). A mass demonstration organized by the non-official, non-party, League of Nations Union on May 8 had affirmed support for collective action and the maintenance of sanctions against Italy.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 315, with footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 318 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> According to Rome telegram No. 69 of May 11 (7205/E529808-09) this attack was made in the *Giornale d'Italia* of May 8, 1936.

<sup>8</sup> Boris E. Stein, Soviet Ambassador in Italy.

<sup>9</sup> The Negus left Addis Ababa on May 2 and was taken to Palestine on board the British cruiser *Enterprise*.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 325 and footnote 1 thereto.

admittedly, did not alter the fact that equilibrium had not yet been reached in the internal situation. Suvich was of the opinion, however, that the progressive economic improvement, as had also been brought out in the astonishingly straightforward way in which the Phoenix scandal<sup>11</sup> had been cleared up, must also have a favourable effect on the internal political situation. Moreover, the final impetus for a Cabinet reshuffle had been Starhemberg's familiar telegram to Mussolini,<sup>12</sup> in that its scarcely veiled attacks on the British and French governmental systems had given these two Governments cause for complaint. In spite of his no longer being a Minister, Starhemberg would, as arranged, attend the football match on Sunday in Rome, and would even arrive a day earlier than had been intended. Naturally he would only come as a private individual, but still it would be interesting to hear what he had to say on the political situation.

HASSELL

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<sup>11</sup> See document No. 288, footnote 7.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 325, footnote 7.

## No. 325

1744/402742-43

*The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 59 of May 14

VIENNA, May 14, 1936—10:30 p.m.

Received May 15—1:10 a.m.

Pol. IV 1.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

The Federal Chancellor has just received me with the assurance that he attached the greatest importance to telling me, directly after the Cabinet reshuffle,<sup>1</sup> how much he hoped for a reconciliation with the Reich and how determined he was to pave the way for this. I told him that without wishing to pass judgement on the value of the new Cabinet, I cordially welcomed the unified leadership, as it would give more clarity to our negotiations. From his statement of principles, I said, I gathered that, in respect of relations with the Reich, he accepted roughly the Seipel<sup>2</sup> formula: "Any combination with the Reich, none without it."

Schuschnigg replied to this question in the affirmative, adding that at this juncture no declarations could be expected of him which would make his position more difficult.

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<sup>1</sup> On May 14 Schuschnigg reconstituted his Cabinet, omitting Prince Starhemberg and Baron von Berger-Waldenegg from it, and himself assuming the posts of Minister for Foreign Affairs and of the Army, and Leader of the Fatherland Front.

<sup>2</sup> Monsignor Ignaz Seipel, Austrian Chancellor 1922-1924 and 1926-1929.



He was going to act and intended, within a week, first to make a National a Minister in the Cabinet. Professor Srbik<sup>3</sup> would at once be appointed to the [Federal] State Council. I hear that he declined a portfolio. Other National personages would be appointed to other corporative bodies. Zernatto,<sup>4</sup> the new State Secretary in the Federal Chancellor's Office, would be Secretary General of the Fatherland Front. He is a National-minded Carinthian. He [Schuschnigg] then intended to grant an amnesty and reparation as far as possible, and to adopt a change of course *vis-à-vis* the Nationals in so far and inasmuch as their propaganda was stopped. He said he was convinced that the Führer or Party authorities could, by their attitude, decisively influence the change. I informed the Federal Chancellor as instructed<sup>5</sup> that the Führer earnestly desired peace and was predisposed towards a fundamental discussion.

I further suggested that he should let me know as soon as he had made his choice as to the Minister who would be dealing with these matters, so that I could sound Berlin regarding his personality and the extent of his competence. The Federal Chancellor agreed to this. Looking back on yesterday's events which, as reported,<sup>6</sup> were finally set in train by Starhemberg's telegram to Mussolini,<sup>7</sup> the Federal Chancellor emphasized that his own telegram to Mussolini was in no way to be interpreted as a one-sided committal to the Italian line. The Rome Pact was of great economic importance to Austria and he hoped that the old Triple Alliance would one day be reborn.

I found the Chancellor in an exultant mood and unperturbed about Starhemberg's counter measures which must, presumably, be expected in due course.

PAPEN

<sup>3</sup> Heinrich Ritter von Srbik, Professor of History at the University of Vienna.

<sup>4</sup> Guido Zernatto. See also document No. 288, footnote 9.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 321.

<sup>6</sup> In despatch A 2619 of May 14 (1549/376283-88).

<sup>7</sup> For the text of Starhemberg's telegram of May 12, congratulating Mussolini on the victory of Fascism in Abyssinia, see *The Times* of May 13, 1936.

## No. 326

7961/E574850-52

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 14, 1936.

RM 421.

Pol. I 10.

Today the Führer received the British Ambassador who, referring to his instructions which he had communicated to me during the past



week, requested a reply, at least in broad outline, to the questions put by the British Government.<sup>1</sup>

The Führer opened his remarks with an expression of regret that the questionnaire should have been published by the British Government. He pointed out that in consequence all quarters who were hostile or unfavourable to a practical settlement of the questions, some of them complicated ones, raised in the questionnaire, had been given an opportunity of disseminating their poison. Since France did not at present have a Government capable of negotiating, there was no sense in replying too soon to the questions which had been raised. Now that the British Memorandum had been published, the reply too would of course have to be made public. This would result in this reply being picked to pieces and denigrated in the press by all the above-mentioned elements who were opposed to a reconciliation between Germany and France and that, in consequence, the new French Government, which would probably be completely orientated to the Left, would be quite unable to risk embarking on an objective assessment of the German reply. The Führer must therefore reserve the right to continue to leave open the date of the reply and to choose the date which would be the most useful for the success, which he desired, of the proposed discussions.

The British Ambassador then asked whether we would give a positive reply to the enquiry contained in the questionnaire about possible participation by the Soviet Republic. To this the Führer replied that he did not intend to enter into commitments more far-reaching than those indicated in his proposal.

The Ambassador then wanted to know whether we were prepared to conclude not only an air pact but also a treaty about the limitation of air forces. The Führer thereupon replied that limitation would only be possible within the framework of general disarmament. He had been prepared to conclude an air limitation pact with the Western Powers. This was no longer possible in consequence of Russia having been brought in and, in particular, as a result of the preparations which had meanwhile been made by Russia, and which were a matter of absolute certainty, for the stationing of Russian air force units on Czech territory. In any case he was now, as previously, of the opinion that there would be no point in a limitation of air forces if one did not at the same time, or beforehand, agree upon the abolition of bombing from the air.

Finally the British Ambassador asked whether the Führer would like a British Minister to come here to discuss the questions put by the British Government. On this the Führer declared that he thought a conversation with a British Minister would be useful in due course, but

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 313.

he would like to reserve the right to return to this later. It seemed to him necessary that the German reply should first be precisely formulated and this would still take some time.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

[*Postscript*]

During the course of his observations, the Führer told the British Ambassador that he wished to leave no room for doubt and would therefore immediately stress once again that a discussion on the exercise of sovereign rights in the Rhineland zone was out of the question for him. In particular, we would construct all such fortifications in the Rhineland as we considered necessary.<sup>2</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>2</sup> An account of this conversation was transmitted by Renthe-Fink to the Missions in London, Rome, Paris, Brussels, Warsaw, Moscow and Berne by airgram on May 15 (3610/E026844-47), and to the Missions in Prague, Vienna, Budapest, Belgrade, Bucharest, the Hague, Tallin, Riga, Kovno and Helsinki on May 16 (3610/E026848-51). This account stated that Hitler had received the British Ambassador on May 13 in the morning.

## No. 327

3610/E026852-54

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2034

LONDON, May 14, 1936.

Received May 16.

Pol. I 12.

Subject: Conversation with Mr. Wigram about the British Blue Book.

With reference to our report A 1820 of May 7.<sup>1</sup>

In connection with my conversation with Lord Cranborne<sup>1</sup> about German criticism of the British Blue Book, Mr. Wigram recently asked me to come and see him again, as he would like to discuss various points from my statements with me. The conversation with Mr. Wigram took place yesterday, when it emerged that apart from a few other unimportant questions concerning the clarification of errors in the memorandum which Lord Cranborne had drawn up after our conversation, the Foreign Office were particularly concerned [?to discuss] with me the remark, contained on page 2 of despatch II R 1173 I

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6710/E509481-82); in this Bismarck reported that, as instructed (see document No. 299), he had expressed to Lord Cranborne Germany's "astonishment at the one-sided and incomplete documentation" contained in the British Blue Book. Lord Cranborne had stated that there had been no intention of attributing blame to Germany or any other Power; the sole purpose of the Blue Book had been to show the British public the efforts which Britain had made to achieve a settlement of the various problems.

of April 29, 1936,<sup>2</sup> that the Blue Book was silent on the subject of French efforts in London, during the period under review, to strike a bargain under which, in exchange for a helpful attitude to Britain in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, the French would obtain certain promises of British support against Germany. Mr. Wigram began by supposing that this passage related to the familiar General Staff talks which took place at the end of December between the British and French General Staffs and he emphatically pointed out that he could not understand this reproach since the British Government had, after all, told us quite plainly that these conversations had dealt exclusively with the Italian affair, nor had the French made any demands whatsoever for British assistance against Germany. In particular the Foreign Secretary had spoken unmistakably to this effect to Ambassador von Hoesch in a conversation on January 6 (see airgram No. 4 of January 6, 1936)<sup>3</sup> and the Reich Foreign Minister too had indicated, in reply to an enquiry by Sir Eric Phipps, that after the British statements the German side had abandoned this assumption. I explained to Mr. Wigram that he was mistaken and that the above-mentioned remark did not relate to the General Staff talks in December, but to the familiar exchange of Notes in October 1935<sup>4</sup> concerning maritime support for Britain by France. Mr. Wigram, who was obviously reassured by this information, then told me that, with the exception of the general expectation of reciprocity expressed in the first French Note, this exchange of Notes, too, had in no way dealt with the German problem. I thereupon pointed out that the French Note of October 18 had never been published, whereupon he took it out of his files and gave it to me to read. In fact there is no mention of Germany in this Note and, as Mr. Wigram told me, the only reason why it was not published was because it attacks the British Government very bitterly. In addition, Mr. Wigram read out to me a statement by General Gamelin, made during the later, December, conversations, which proved that the French side too had been sincerely concerned not to cause Germany any anxiety by possible French mobilization measures against Italy. According to this, General Gamelin had declared that, should France mobilize against Italy, this mobilization, as far as air defence was concerned, would have to cover the whole of French territory. Such a measure might, however, give rise to anxiety in Germany and therefore, should the case arise, Germany would have to be informed in advance through diplomatic channels in order that it should not be thought there that these measures were in any way directed against Germany.

Mr. Wigram declared that his chief concern had been to clarify this point. In any case, he said, Lord Cranborne had already informed me

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 299, second paragraph.

<sup>3</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 484.

<sup>4</sup> See *ibid.*, document No. 355 and footnote 5 thereto.



that the Blue Book was directed against no one and that he could not, therefore, accept the German conclusions. He did not believe that there would be any purpose in discussing in detail the various points raised by me but I must not conclude that the British Government were in agreement with the representations made by us.

I, for my part, took the opportunity to repeat once again briefly to Mr. Wigram the views contained in your above-mentioned despatch and to stress our opinion that the selection of the documents had been one-sided.

(Signed in draft) BISMARCK

Certified:

ACHILLES

Chancery Clerk.

## No. 328

4619/E198307-08

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 15, 1936.

RM 424.

The Turkish State Secretary, Numan, who called on me today, told me the following in answer to my enquiry as to the purpose and the outcome of his visit to the capitals of the Balkans and to Moscow.

He had undertaken this journey in order, by means of personal discussions, to clarify the question of the Straits,<sup>1</sup> which Turkey had brought up, and, if possible, to do some helpful preparatory work on it. He had met with understanding everywhere, except in Bucharest where they had been piqued because the Turkish Government had not been in touch with Rumania before presenting their request in Geneva.<sup>2</sup> The Rumanians too had calmed down in the end and he hoped that the negotiations which were to open shortly would lead to a satisfactory result for Turkey.

I then asked Numan what other impressions he had gained, especially in Moscow. He replied that the Russians were convinced that we had the firm intention of attacking them within the foreseeable future. To this end we wished to fortify the Rhineland, so as to prevent the French from rendering assistance. For this reason they [the Russians] were trying to do everything they could to encircle us and would for example make their attitude towards Italy in the settlement of the Abyssinian question dependent upon Italy's attitude towards Germany. I endeavoured to explain to Numan that our decision to restore our sovereignty over the Rhineland derived, as we had been saying in

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 277 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 300 and footnote 4 thereto.



unambiguous terms for the past year, from the Franco-Russian alliance. Consequently it was a complete misrepresentation of the facts if the Russians now claimed to be threatened by our action in the Rhineland and by the possible fortification of our Western frontiers. Moreover, in my opinion these were only pretexts. The true reason lay in our ideological differences and in our struggle against Communism as represented and supported by the Bolshevik Government.

Numan then wanted to know how we intended to answer the British questionnaire.<sup>3</sup> I told him that we had not yet drawn up a draft. But it was certain that we would not be prepared to enter into a discussion of our rights in the Rhineland, even at the impending negotiations. We would also continue to reject the plan for a pact with Russia, which was again being brought up, since we had no occasion to conclude such pacts with States which did not border on Germany.

I then asked Numan how things stood in respect of the Mediterranean pact now under discussion. He replied that Turkey's attitude to this pact would depend on the participants. Turkey would only consider such a pact to be a safeguard if Britain participated in it too. Without Britain Turkey had no interest in the conclusion of a Mediterranean pact.<sup>4</sup>

Finally Numan also came to speak about Geneva; he said that the League of Nations was in an untenable situation. It was at present not possible to foresee whether it would manage to regain its lost prestige. Turkey would do all she could to ensure the continued existence of the institution as such, although perhaps with a changed statute and purpose.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the idea, put forward by the States of the Balkan Entente, of a Mediterranean pact to include Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. For reports on this plan see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. III, pp. 138-139, 141-142 and 158.

## No. 329

115/117431-32

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 15, 1936.

RM 426.

The Lithuanian Minister<sup>1</sup> called on me today and wanted first of all to obtain information from me about the reply to the British questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> I told him that we had not yet reached a stage where exhaustive information could be given.

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<sup>1</sup> Jurgis Šaulys.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

He then asked whether we were prepared to conclude non-aggression pacts with the other Baltic States too, besides Lithuania. I replied that we had no real reason for so doing, as we considered that non-aggression pacts were only profitable between States with adjacent frontiers.

The Minister went on to ask whether we would agree to the proposed pact with Russia; I said we would not.

Finally, and with great circumlocution, he broached the subject of German-Lithuanian relations. I told him in this respect that I could not conceal my astonishment at the view expressed by the Lithuanians when the economic discussions<sup>3</sup> were resumed, i.e., that of implying that Germany was only entering into these negotiations because she could not exist without Lithuanian imports. He was well aware that we had suggested these economic negotiations in order that a more favourable atmosphere in German-Lithuanian relations might gradually be created. It was with regret that I had also been forced to note that recently all kinds of disagreeable things had again happened in Memel, which made me think it doubtful whether Lithuania laid any value on improving relations with Germany. Among other things I mentioned in this connexion the spying on the Consul General.<sup>4</sup> M. Šaulys replied that he had already intervened and stopped this, and that it was merely a case of subordinate authorities exceeding their duties. M. Šaulys stated, moreover, that the Lithuanian Government still laid great value on bringing about better relations. The activities, however, of certain societies on the German frontier, who were agitating and distributing seditious leaflets in the Memel Territory, constituted a great hindrance to reconciliation. M. Šaulys then drew from his pocket a Note<sup>5</sup> containing complaints regarding the matter of the leaflets and naming the official bodies concerned on the German side. I promised that I would have this matter thoroughly investigated and that, should it be established that official bodies had really been involved, I would see that the matter was remedied.

V[ON] N[EURATH]

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<sup>3</sup> For the resumption of economic negotiations after the Memel elections, see vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 554 and 578. In telegram, No. 20 of Apr. 6 (8919/E623175-76), Hemmen informed the Legation in Kovno and the Consulate in Memel of the state of the negotiations with the Lithuanian delegation, who were adopting this view.

<sup>4</sup> Reinhold von Saucken.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (9812/E691068-69). The Note to the Foreign Minister was dated May 15 and gave details of Lithuanian complaints.

## No. 330

7198/E529684

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 15, 1936.  
Pol. I 34.

Attolico told me *in strict confidence* that Mussolini, on March 7, only an hour before he learned of the contents of the German statement on the occupation of the Rhineland,<sup>1</sup> of which he had had "a presentiment", had decided to put Italy's withdrawal from the League of Nations into effect. Hence, so Attolico thought, Mussolini's annoyance over our offer to return to Geneva.

Attolico did not seem to expect that Italy would withdraw from the League of Nations now.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

## No. 331

7790/E562605-06

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 469  
The Counsellor of Embassy  
is informed.

LONDON, May 15, 1936.  
SK 81 geh.

Subject: The Anglo-Russian naval conversations.

On Wednesday, May 13, the Soviet Embassy furnished the Foreign Office, in the person of Sir Robert Vansittart, with their Note in reply to the British Government's invitation to enter into negotiations on naval questions.

The Soviet Union has accepted the invitation with two reservations:

1) That with regard to these negotiations it must be clearly understood from the outset that, in the negotiations with Great Britain, the Soviet Union would be able to assume only such obligations as were binding in the same degree upon Germany.

2) That all such obligations as the Soviet Union was prepared to accept should be applicable to the Red Fleet in the Far East only to the extent to which Japan would be bound by a similar agreement. (It is not clear from the information given to me whether the reference here is to a special agreement between the Soviet Union and Japan or to

the recognition by Japan of the London Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936.)

The Soviets now await a reply with regard to these reservations, and they assume that, in the event of her agreeing, Britain will fix a date for the start of negotiations.

The above report reached me from a private source. The press contains only general information to the effect that the Soviets' Note in reply has been communicated to the Foreign Office.

WASSNER

## No. 332

147/78405-06

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 16, 1936.

RM 428.

The Polish Ambassador called on me today and brought with him, besides greetings from Minister Beck, some information which Beck had instructed him to give me about the impressions the Minister [Beck] had gained in Geneva.<sup>1</sup> M. Beck had declared that he had never seen Geneva in such a state of chaos as it had been this time. No one had known what was to happen. Among the smaller States there was lively dissatisfaction on all sides. As a result of the change of Cabinet,<sup>2</sup> the French had maintained great reserve, and only Eden had tried to put through the British views on the Abyssinian-Italian case. The activity displayed by the Russians had been remarkable: M. Litvinov had tried with much zeal to play the part of mediator between Italy and Britain, mainly in order, M. Beck thought, to gain Italy's sympathy so as to be able to draw her into an anti-German front. The spectre of the Eastern Pact had also raised its head again in Geneva; indeed, the Pact had been specially advocated by Litvinov, in the form of the conclusion of a regional pact for the States interested in the East. Beck's attitude to any Eastern Pact was, as hitherto, unfavourable. He wished this to be specially stressed once again and to add that the Polish Government were unanimous in sharing his view. M. Beck was showing some anxiety about the progress being made by Communism everywhere. This point had indeed been one of the chief subjects discussed yesterday between Beck and General Göring.<sup>3</sup> M. Beck, during his short stay in Berlin, had called on Göring to express his gratitude because Göring

<sup>1</sup> Beck had attended the League Council's meeting at Geneva.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 315, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> No record of this has been found.



had sent his own aeroplane to fetch him from Geneva. M. Beck, who had been very indisposed, had spent the rest of his four-hour stay in bed.

With regard to Beck's forthcoming visit to Belgrade, M. Lipski said that the object of this visit was to consolidate the good relations between Belgrade and Warsaw which already existed. When I interjected that Prague would probably not be very pleased about this visit, M. Lipski agreed.

M. Beck had not yet been fully in the picture about the events in Austria. In any case the developments appeared to him to be only logical following the introduction of general national service.<sup>4</sup>

V. N[EURATH]<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For the Austrian Government changes see document No. 325 and footnote 1 thereto. For the reintroduction of general conscription in Austria see document No. 253, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> Another memorandum by Neurath of even date, RM 429 (147/78407) reads: "The Polish Ambassador told me during his visit today that the Cabinet changes in Warsaw meant a strengthening of the Government and a refusal to the elements of the Left. The changes had been decided upon some time ago but had been delayed until Minister Beck's return from Geneva." The formation of a new Polish Cabinet under the previous Deputy War Minister, Stawoj-Składkowski, who also became Minister of the Interior, was announced on May 15. Ambassador Moltke commented on the new Government in telegram No. 26 of May 15 (2102/455027-28).

## No. 333

939/299250-54

*Minister Wiehl to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*<sup>1</sup>

CAPE TOWN, May 17, 1936.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: Pirow<sup>2</sup> is now leaving for England next Friday and will arrive there on June 8. He intends to be back here in September at the latest. The primary purpose of his journey is to discuss South African and British defence and air traffic questions, which, however, according to the view held here, are very closely connected with the new situation in Abyssinia and in the Mediterranean, and also with the question of the redistribution of colonial possessions in Africa. I have recently telegraphed and reported about this connection,<sup>3</sup> and therefore I will only shortly recapitulate here: The establishment of Italian power in Abyssinia is regarded here not only as a weakening of the great friend and protector, Britain, but also as a direct threat to South Africa. People here are convinced that Mussolini will set up a black army in Abyssinia, which one day, together with the French negro regiments, might march against the white countries in Africa. The

<sup>1</sup> This copy of the document here printed was minuted on May 29 by Erdmannsdorff (939/299249) to Kotze for submission, at Dieckhoff's request, to Neurath.

<sup>2</sup> Oswald Pirow, South African Minister of Defence, Minister of Railways and of Ports.

<sup>3</sup> No such reports have been found.

Union feels called upon to protect White Africa against this danger, in cooperation with Britain. To this end the sanctions against Italy must be maintained and if possible intensified, and to this end White Africa must be rallied under British and/or South African leadership. Therefore no handing back to Germany of East Africa, and if possible not of South-West Africa either. By contrast, German colonial possessions in Central and West Africa would not only not be harmful but would even be desirable. For Germany could then keep the black millions there in order<sup>4</sup> and withdraw them from the pernicious influence of the French and Italian North. In the event of the apprehended advance by France and Italy to the South, she would have to bear the brunt of the first onslaught and thus, in a conflict of this kind, would be forced without further ado to side with Britain. To have Germany as such a neighbour here would also be an advantage to the Union in that German policy towards the natives coincides with its own, in contrast to the more liberal British policy which prevails in Rhodesia and Kenya, and against which the Union would have difficulty in prevailing in the event of a closer connection with these territories.

These are roughly the ideas of the people who determine policy here. This is not affected by the fact that, despite the sanctions, the shipping subsidy had continued to be paid to Italy throughout the war in Abyssinia, and indeed, as I know from a reliable source, that shipments of meat worth thousands of pounds sterling a month (which probably derive from the subsidy) went, and are still going, to Abyssinia.

What impression P[irow] will make with such ideas in London I am naturally unable to judge. He himself seems to be fairly confident, and indeed the importance of South Africa for Britain has, of course, been considerably increased by the redistribution of strength. I heard an interesting thing in this connection about a dinner that was given for P[irow] a few days ago by the Chamber of Commerce here. He is said to have spoken about the purpose of his impending journey and to have mentioned the large-scale development of the harbour and of the fortifications of Cape Town, which are planned as part of the defence measures and which, he said, the Union would carry out substantially from its own resources. In return it could, however, expect some requital from Britain. It is true that in this context he only mentioned, as was appropriate for the select body of businessmen whom he was addressing, that he would make efforts in London to see that British shipping lines plying to the Far East would be re-routed from the Suez Canal, which had now become unsafe, via Cape Town. It is obvious, however, that this will not be the only, and not even the first, requital which he will probably attempt to obtain in Britain.

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal exclamation mark in Neurath's handwriting.

Whether P[irow] will come to Germany is still uncertain. I have not pressed the point and, particularly when discussing the colonial question, I have maintained reserve in accordance with my instructions.<sup>5</sup> Since, however, I met P[irow] on various occasions for other reasons, it was naturally unavoidable that we also spoke about the possibility of a journey to Germany. I told him that he would be welcome, but that it could not be foreseen at present whether the colonial question would be ripe for discussion by then. He replied that he would only go to Germany if the British Government wished him to, and if he himself thought that he could further the matter by discussions in Germany. By "matter" he means not only the colonial question but also the achievement of closer German-British cooperation. But I have the impression that he thinks there is some likelihood of his going to Germany. At any rate, I hear that he has spoken of it to other people as being a fact, and has expressed the hope that he will again be able to speak to leading Germans and this time Göring as well, whom he did not see last time.<sup>6</sup> I seem to remember that Brehmer<sup>7</sup> thought he had learned of the Führer's remark, about which I wrote to you on April 20<sup>8</sup> (that he had seldom liked a foreign statesman so much as P[irow]) either direct from Göring or through an intermediary. This suggests to me that perhaps there may be plans for a visit by P[irow] to Germany which are not going through the Foreign Ministry.

In the event of his coming to Berlin, I need not tell you anything more about his personality, since you know him, of course, from his visit three years ago<sup>9</sup> and are in the picture from my reports. He has at present the best prospects of becoming Prime Minister if Hertzog resigns, as he probably will, after the next elections at the end of 1937. (More about this next time.) Next to Smuts,<sup>10</sup> he is already the most active force in foreign policy here and he has the greatest sympathy with Germany and National Socialism. But we must by no means be misled by this into perhaps enlisting him for us against the British; I would not tell or show him anything which the British are perhaps not to know. Apart from this, he would doubtless be a suitable intermediary between us and Britain. Not that he has many or influential connections there or enjoys particular confidence (on the contrary, here at least he has hitherto been suspect among people of British stock

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<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Correct."

<sup>6</sup> According to telegram No. 36 of Aug. 8, 1933 (8798/E613431) sent by Bülow to Pretoria, Pirow, during his visit to Germany, July 28-Aug. 8, 1933, had long conversations with leading personages of the German Railways and the Reichswehr and was received by Hitler at Obersalzberg. No other record of these conversations has been found.

<sup>7</sup> Captain (Navy) Fritz Brehmer, Consul General of the Union of South Africa in Hamburg.

<sup>8</sup> Not found.

<sup>9</sup> See footnote 6 above.

<sup>10</sup> General Jan Christiaan Smuts was at this time South African Minister of Justice.



because of his German descent and sympathies), but even in Britain he will have to be taken seriously because of his position and prospects here.

As regards discussions with him, I would recommend, apart from the subjects already mentioned, economic questions as well, and not only orders for Junkers aircraft and railway material, for which, by virtue of his office he is responsible, but also, in general, the well-known unsatisfactory position of German exports to this country. I would refer you to my letter to Rüter of April 16, Kap. 63,<sup>11</sup> in the Oertsan matter, of which I think I sent you a copy. I also have reason to suppose that P[irow] is preparing for conversations of this kind; at least I have heard that he has been gathering information from third parties about statistics, etc. I also believe that the views which Dr. Solmssen expounded to me have been suggested to him, namely, that for a really large-scale increase in German exports to this country an understanding with British finance and the British export industry is necessary. (Report of April 30, Kap. 127/266.)<sup>12</sup> These views seem to me well worth considering. For their implementation it would doubtless be desirable if they were brought up with British business circles not only by ourselves (for which purpose Dr. S[olmssen] described himself to me as being the appropriate intermediary) but also by the South Africans. P[irow] could perhaps cause this to be done both in London and here. I take it that Dr. S[olmssen's] plans have meanwhile been investigated at your end after his return. If it is desired that they be gone into further, it would certainly be worth while to interest P[irow] in them; in this way the German-British cooperation in Africa which he desires could first be realized in a section of the economic field.

Finally, a personal tip: P[irow] has a cousin, a Major or Lieutenant-Colonel Ilgen, who is at present, I believe, battalion commander in an infantry regiment in Schwerin. I think he would take it as a particular mark of attention if, in the event of an escort or adjutant being allocated to him for any military inspections or journeys, this gentleman were to be seconded for the purpose. Whether anything of the sort would be intended and, if so, feasible, I do not of course know.

At all events it would probably be desirable to inform the Embassy in London about P[irow's] visit to Britain and about the situation with regard to a possible visit to Germany.

Yours, etc.,

WIEHL

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<sup>11</sup> Not found.

<sup>12</sup> Not found.



## No. 334

517/236261-65

*Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, May 19, 1936.

Pol. I 57 g.

The Foreign Ministry has learned from an absolutely sure source the following concerning the development of political relations between Italy and the Soviet Union during the Abyssinian conflict:

From the start of the African campaign onwards the Governments of Italy and the Soviet Union have remained constantly in touch. Unaffected by the violent press campaign between the two countries, the Governments in Moscow and Rome have been concerned to avoid as far as possible a serious deterioration in their political relations. As early as the occasion of the League of Nations Assembly in October 1935, during which sanctions against Italy were resolved upon, the Peoples' Commissar for Foreign Affairs, Litvinov, openly expressed the hope that despite the Soviet Union's participation in the League of Nations' measures against Italy, to which they were compelled by the Geneva Covenant, friendly relations could be maintained between the two countries. In addition, this desire was repeatedly confirmed by both sides in confidential conversations which took place between Italian and Soviet-Russian statesmen.

It was the object of Soviet policy, in agreement with France, to keep the door open for Italy to return to the Stresa Front and therefore to avoid Italy's seeing herself compelled, under pressure of sanctions, to seek to draw closer to Germany. Similarly it was in Italy's interest to enlist the international influence of the Soviet Union against an intensification of sanctions, and more particularly against the imposition of an oil embargo. In this respect the fact that the Soviet Union was one of the biggest suppliers of oil to Italy—at least in the first months of war—naturally played a decisive part. The central problem in the Soviet Russian-Italian conversations was, thus, both the possibility of a German-Italian understanding, and the question of the oil embargo. Whilst the Soviet Government were, to outward appearances, numbered amongst the most determined advocates of the policy of sanctions—their attitude being determined equally by regard for Britain and by the desire to create a precedent out of the example of Italy—they secretly gave the Italian Government soothing assurances that they would oppose an oil embargo because in practice it would not be possible to obtain the requisite collaboration of all the Powers without fail. The

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Embassies in Rome, Moscow, London, Warsaw, Paris and the Consulate in Geneva.

Soviet Government also laid claim to have rendered the Italians the service of having worked, through their representative in Geneva, both directly and indirectly against an intensification of sanctions, and especially against the imposition of an oil embargo. For their part, the Italians, during the course of the conflict, repeatedly and clearly gave the Soviet Government to understand that the German-Italian *rapprochement*, which Moscow feared, could only be avoided by the Soviet Government pursuing a policy of moderation.

Nevertheless, the ambiguity of this policy made it impossible to avoid a growing mistrust on either side, which in turn led to an increasing deterioration in the relations between the two countries. Meanwhile, it has been possible to perceive renewed attempts, made on the part of the Soviet Government since the restoration of German military sovereignty in the Rhineland, and made on the part of the Italian Government, too, since the final defeat of Abyssinia, to achieve a *détente* in their relations with one another—attempts that, as far as Italy is concerned, may be attributed to Britain's reaction to the annexation of Abyssinia and to the attitude of vacillation recently adopted by France. At any rate, the Italian Ambassador in Moscow<sup>2</sup> recently suggested to the Soviet Government that they endeavour to induce the French Government to treat Italy's present position with more understanding. In so doing, the Italian Ambassador pointed out that France, in pursuing her present policy which was directed against Italy's interests, was risking those friendly relations with Italy which Paris urgently requires. The Ambassador further stated that it would also lie in the interests of the Soviet Government for the European balance of power to continue to be maintained through good Italo-French relations.

As the Foreign Ministry are reliably informed, these Italian endeavours have met with a favourable response from the Soviet Government. The Italian Ambassador has been told in the Soviet-Russian Commissariat for Foreign Affairs that the Soviet Union look upon Italy as the only Power able to prevent Germany from carrying out her alleged designs in the matter of the *Anschluss*, and that on general grounds they have the greatest interest in the restoration of cordial relations between the States of Europe. We know for a fact that the Foreign Affairs Commissar, Litvinov, endeavoured to mediate between Italy and Britain during the last Council session in Geneva.

We have, for the moment, no occasion to believe that Italy is seriously determined to abandon her policy of understanding with Germany in the interests of her relations with Soviet Russia. Rather does it at present appear as though the Italian Government, in view of their difficult international position, were pursuing the tactical objective of detaching the Soviet Union from the side of their enemies by making

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<sup>2</sup> Pietro Arone, Baron di Valentino.

play with Germany. On what basis Italo-Soviet Russian relations will evolve is very difficult to predict at present, given the confused European situation. But in any case this question merits our most serious attention.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

No. 335

7215/E530080-83

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, May 19, 1936.  
Pol. VII 58.

With reference to our despatch Pol. VII 25 of May 16.<sup>1</sup>

On May 12 the Italian Ambassador<sup>2</sup> here communicated the text of the Italian decree by which Abyssinia has been placed under Italian sovereignty.<sup>3</sup> When news was received that a similar *démarche* had also been made in other capitals, the State Secretary saw reason to ask the Italian Ambassador subsequently, on May 15,<sup>4</sup> whether, by communicating to us the annexation decree, he had intended to notify us of the annexation. This the Ambassador denied. He said he had merely notified us of the annexation decree but not of the annexation itself. When the State Secretary observed that this distinction was difficult to appreciate, and that the Reich Government were expressly reserving their reply, the Ambassador pointed out that on May 12 he had handed over no Note, had put no questions, and given no explanations, but had confined himself to the simple communication of the annexation decree. In so doing (whether on the instructions of his Government or on his own initiative was not apparent) he had differed from his colleagues abroad, who had handed over a Note or a *Note Verbale*. There was no point, he said, in prejudicing relations between Germany and Italy by causing each other embarrassment. Italy was not expecting any reply, at least not at present, and it was therefore unnecessary for the Reich Government to reserve their reply. Later, of course, the question of recognition and of converting the Embassy into a Consulate and similar matters would have to be discussed.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7215/E530067-71); this enclosed a memorandum on the legal position of German subjects in Abyssinia after the collapse of the Ethiopian Government and the proclamation of the King of Italy as Emperor of Ethiopia.

<sup>2</sup> Bernardo Attolico. A minute by Bülow (4602/E190339) dated May 12 reads: "The Italian Ambassador brought the attached notice [*Notiz*] from [*sic*] the Italian Decree of May 9 concerning Abyssinia and presented it without comment." The enclosure is missing (see also footnote 4 below).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 318 and footnote 1 thereto. Copies of this Decree of May 9 were communicated to the Secretary General of the League of Nations on May 10, and to the French and British Governments on May 12.

<sup>4</sup> In a conversation recorded by Bülow in a memorandum of even date (4602/E190345-46) which states that Attolico had communicated an extract from the Decree.



It is obvious that in the present situation the Italian Government are anxious to procure the recognition of the Italian conquest by a number of States as soon as possible. On the assumption that our recognition could be regarded as probable, in view of our attitude hitherto in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, the Italian Government have thus obviously thought first of Germany. In this connexion Italian tactics are unmistakably directed towards attempting to prejudice our attitude by skilful manœuvring, and to give the impression, at least outwardly, that we agree to the annexation. Even although it is in our interests to create the friendliest possible relations with Italy, nevertheless we cannot go so far as to allow ourselves to be used as a cat's paw. So far, none of the leading States has recognized Italy's conquest. On the contrary, Britain and France have expressly announced their reservations. If we were to announce our recognition at the present juncture, we would be departing from our attitude hitherto which has consisted in observing neutrality towards the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and similarly towards the controversy between Italy and the League Powers. We would probably affront Britain and other Powers and unnecessarily expose ourselves politically. It is clear that the political disadvantages in which this would result for us would not be offset by any possible advantages which Italy could offer us. For the time being, therefore, it is intended to continue to maintain our attitude of biding our time.

Should the question be broached to you by the Italians, you should say that for the present we have no reason to define our attitude. Moreover, it would, of course, be necessary, before any recognition, to clarify the various problems arising out of German interests in Abyssinia. For the time being, you should say, the most important thing seems to us to be that a satisfactory *de facto* state of affairs should be created. In this connexion we have already taken all the necessary steps, in that the German Chargé d'Affaires in Addis Ababa is now charged to deal only with the protection of the citizens of the German Reich, of protected persons [*Schutzgenossen*] and their interests, and to keep in touch with the Italian authorities. You should also emphasize the accommodating attitude we have shown, as indicated by the fact that, even though we have not announced our recognition of the Italian conquest, we have avoided everything which might create difficulties for the Italians in the execution of their policy.

Should any third party broach the question to you, you should say that the Italian Ambassador, without preferring any request, merely handed over an extract from the decree of May 9 regarding the annexation of Abyssinia. We are neutral in the Italo-Abyssinian conflict and in the conflict between Italy and the League of Nations, and will adhere to this attitude. This excludes our taking sides in the question of annexation as well, at least for the time being.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF



## No. 336

7790/E562650

*The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*

M.Att. 1175

BERLIN, May 19, 1936.

zu SK 82 geh.<sup>1</sup>

It is requested that the following telegram be sent in cipher immediately:

German Embassy, London, Naval Attaché. You should make a statement to Mr. Craigie in the following sense: On your own responsibility you have once again made enquiries<sup>2</sup> of your Government about the communication of the German Views.<sup>3</sup> The Government wish you to communicate them immediately and intend to deal in writing with the individual points as was done during the previous negotiations. Commander-in-Chief. M.Att. 1175.<sup>4</sup>

M

DENSCH

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7790/E562646-48); this was a communication, Pol. I 3 g. of May 15, from the Foreign Ministry, enclosing a copy of telegram No. 98 of May 14 from London in which Bismarck reported that he had been rung up by the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Monsell, who fully shared Craigie's grave doubts about the building of two further "A"-class cruisers and feared serious consequences. This communication bears the following marginal notes: (i) "On May 18, after agreement with Ambassador v. R[ibben-trop], the Naval Attaché in London received orders immediately to hand over officially the German Views of May 4. M has the text of the telegram. SK I M[össel], May 18." (ii) "The version [dated] May 18 of the orders was not sent because of objections by the Foreign Ministry. The new text is set forth in M. Att. 1175 (see annex) [i.e., the document here printed]. SK I M[össel], May 19." The version of May 18 (7790/E562649) reads: "With reference to your No. 464 [document No. 323, enclosure]. Communicate latest "Views" on Naval Treaty, M.Att. 1009, [document No. 309] at once as ordered without further comment."

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 323, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>4</sup> According to the Telegram Control Register, the document here printed was despatched at 12:40 p.m. as telegram No. 108.

## No. 337

7790/E562651-52

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 427 II

LONDON, May 19, 1936.

Received May 20.

SK 86 geh.

Subject: The communication of "The Views of the German Government".

With reference to your No. 1009 of May 4, 1936<sup>1</sup> and telegram of May 19, 1936.<sup>2</sup>

As ordered, I handed Mr. Craigie "The Views of the German Government, etc." at 16:45 hours today, and at the same time informed him of the Reich Government's being willing to deal in writing with the individual points, as was done during the previous negotiations.

Mr. Craigie accepted the Views whilst expressing his keen regret that the Reich Government felt obliged to take this course as regards "A"-class cruisers. This was, he said, an eventuality which one could only describe as "most unfortunate".<sup>3</sup>

He said that the British Government would reply to these "Views" in due course and he made brief remarks on the consequences throughout the whole world which must inevitably ensue from the building of the "A"-class cruisers.

In this connexion he pointed out that Germany would certainly not like it if France, as a result of the five German cruisers, were perhaps to build more cruisers and Russia, too, perhaps [build] five, instead of agreeing on a "holiday".<sup>3</sup>

WASSNER

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 336.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

## No. 338

218/147885-87

### *Memorandum by the Ambassador to Japan*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 19, 1936.

[W VII OA 197].<sup>1</sup>

I had a detailed conversation yesterday with Reich Minister von Blomberg about the German-Chinese credit transaction<sup>2</sup> (Hapro)<sup>3</sup> and General von Reichenau's journey to China.<sup>4</sup> I began the conversation by saying that the credit deal together with the Reichenau journey was a *fait accompli*, and that, moreover, the question of whether our expectations of this transaction would be realized did not fall within my direct sphere of competence; on the other hand, I must try to ensure that the strain placed on German-Japanese relations by the Hapro-Reichenau complex of questions was kept to a minimum.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from a handwritten minute (218/147884) attached to the document here printed. The minute reads: "Conversation between Amb[assador] v[on] Dirksen and Reich Min[ister] v[on] Blomberg concerning the journey of Gen[eral] von Reichenau. Under Seal. To the Klein file. V[oss], June 8."

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 270.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 281.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 306.

The objections and fears of the Japanese would be on two scores: on the one hand they would have fears of a politico-military kind that China's military power would be increased and, on the other hand, they would regard the economic aid granted by us to China as an encroachment upon their sphere of power (Hirota doctrine).<sup>5</sup>

It could be expected, I said, that their misgivings would be considerably relieved if two measures were taken:

1. It was urgently desirable that General von Reichenau should not confine his journey to China but should extend it to include Japan and thus give it the outward appearance of a Far Eastern study tour.

2. It was also desirable that the appropriate Japanese authorities should be informed by us in good time and candidly about our plans in China and about the purpose of Reichenau's journey, and that this should be done before this news became public knowledge. It was therefore advisable that both the Embassy in Tokyo (Military Attaché Colonel Ott) and the Japanese Military Attaché here, General Oshima, should be put in the picture immediately.

Field Marshal von Blomberg replied, he could agree to the first proposal, namely, that Reichenau's journey should be extended, only in so far as it did not jeopardize the real purpose of his journey to China, namely, closer contact with Marshal Chiang Kai-shek and with the Chinese authorities. If the purpose of Reichenau's journey were endangered, the economic transaction would at the same time also be jeopardized. When I objected that the economic transaction was surely settled already, on our side by granting the credit and on the Chinese side by the promised deliveries of goods, and that consequently Reichenau's journey had nothing to do with this question, Herr von Blomberg replied that, in view of the nature of the confidential relations between himself and Chiang Kai-shek, such a connexion did exist. General von Reichenau was in fact travelling as his personal confidant to Chiang Kai-shek. If General von Reichenau were able, in Nanking, to evoke understanding for, and tacit agreement to, the idea of his journey to Japan, he, Blomberg, would have no objection to the journey. It must, however, for the reasons just mentioned, begin through China and not be started in Japan. Herr von Blomberg thought that Herr von Reichenau himself would in fact be very willing to go on to Japan.

As far as informing the Japanese authorities in good time was concerned, Herr von Blomberg agreed without any reservation and promised to do what was necessary.

When we discussed the question whether the Chinese would in any case be in a position to deliver the goods promised, Herr von Blomberg thought that we, at all events, ought not to proceed too far with our

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 238 and footnote 2 thereto.

part of the bargain in advance but should wait and see whether the Chinese fulfilled their part in good time. Up till now the Chinese had only received "a few samples" from us.

Herewith submitted to

State Secretary von Bülow and the Foreign Minister,  
via Senior Counsellor von Erdmannsdorff.

VON DIRKSEN

## No. 339

6710/E509556-58

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

No. 97 of May 20

BERLIN, May 20, 1936—9:05 p.m.

zu II R 1284.<sup>1</sup>

II R 1302.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 68 of May 10.<sup>1</sup>

For your conversation with Mussolini, I would draw your attention to the following points, for guidance on the language you should hold.

1. With reference to Abyssinia see our despatch Pol. VII 58.<sup>3</sup>

2. If the question of Austria is raised, you can tell Mussolini that we still adhere in principle to the idea of an understanding and are prepared to come to a settlement with Schuschnigg. That the dualism in the Austrian Government has been eliminated does not, however, alone suffice to create the necessary prerequisite. We are concerned that the internal situation in Austria should be clarified; thus we are by no means set on this or that personage. Should Schuschnigg succeed in clarifying internal issues in Austria, a relaxation of tension between Germany and Austria would automatically ensue. In the nature of things, however, the initiative does not lie with us, but with Schuschnigg. You should add that we are awaiting further developments with exemplary patience.

3. The British questionnaire. You may explain our attitude to Mussolini on the basis of our informatory despatch II R 1277 of May 9,<sup>4</sup> but you should present your remarks as your own personal opinion. You should also tell him that no decision has yet been reached with regard to the timing and the form of our reply.<sup>5</sup> This will, you should say, probably be in rather technical terms, in order to bring the discus-

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 318.

<sup>2</sup> Rome telegram No. 70 of May 12 (6710/E509550); this confirmed that the missing group in the penultimate sentence of document No. 318 should read: "end of this week".

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 335.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 317.

<sup>5</sup> At this point an additional sentence reading: "We are thinking of answering before long [*demnächst*]", was deleted from the draft by Bülow before despatch.



sion back into the normal diplomatic channels. We assume that no progress can be made in the discussion before the middle of June, if at all, since the new French Government will probably not be in a position to function before then. We believe moreover that we are only in the stage of preliminary skirmishes and still a long way from the discussion proper. For this reason, too, our return to the League of Nations also lies in the more distant future. I have no objection to your making appropriate use of the content of the conversation between the Führer and Chancellor and the British Ambassador (see our despatch Pol. I 10).<sup>6</sup>

BÜLOW

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<sup>6</sup> See document No. 326 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 340

3610/E026855-61

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, May 20, 1936.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor v. Schmieden

e.o. Pol. I 15.

The so-called "Proposals" drawn up in London on March 19 by the representatives of the remaining Locarno Powers<sup>2</sup> contained an undertaking (section 3, paragraph 2) whereby the four Governments were forthwith to instruct their General Staffs to enter into contact with a view to arranging the technical conditions for fulfilling the obligations devolving upon them in the event of unprovoked aggression. Although this obligation evoked lively criticisms from the British public (see in this connexion our despatch II R 949 II of May 15,<sup>3</sup> concerning Lloyd George's observations about the General Staff talks), the British Government have not allowed themselves to be dissuaded from the promise they had given. They did, however, take the precaution of ensuring that the General Staff talks, which had originally been planned to take place in a Continental city (Paris or Brussels), should be held in London itself. In this way the British Government thought to obtain the best guarantee of keeping to the express assurances which they had given to Parliament that the

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in London, Paris, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Brussels, The Hague and Berne.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (6710/E508635-38, 626-28). This circular gave particulars of Lloyd George's speech in the House of Commons on Mar. 26 (see document No. 223 and footnote 8 thereto), of his article in the *Sunday Express* of Mar. 29, 1936, of the ensuing correspondence in *The Times* between Duff Cooper, Lloyd George and others, and of other material dealing with the part played by General Staff commitments in precipitating the First World War in 1914; the Missions were instructed to make use of this material as and when opportunity offered.

consultations should be confined within narrow technical limits and should not extend to the political sphere.

The conversations then took place in London on April 15 and 16 between the General Staffs of the three Services (Army, Navy and Air Force) of Great Britain, France and Belgium. Those taking part were: For Britain: Lieutenant General Dill (Army), Vice Admiral James, Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Navy), and Air Vice Marshal Courteney (Air Force); for France: General Schweissguth, Deputy Chief of the General Staff (Army), General Mouchard (Air Force), and Vice Admiral Abrial (Navy); for Belgium: Major General de Fontaine,<sup>4</sup> Major Wouters, the Air Attaché in London, and two or three junior officers.

Italy sent no delegation to London, since the Italian Government had subsequently refused to approve the so-called "Proposals", although the Italian Ambassador in London had collaborated in drawing them up.

The conversations were at first held within each of the Services separately. The results were embodied in a joint protocol, the contents of which have been kept secret. At the time the public were informed of the results of the talks only in a non-committal communiqué.<sup>5</sup> The circumstance that, contrary to what had been stated in advance in the French press, the talks only lasted two days, gave rise even then to the supposition that they could not have had the significance which France had originally desired, but that they had been kept within the narrow limits desired by Britain and outlined in our despatch II R 978 of April 7<sup>6</sup> on the conversation between Ambassador von Ribbentrop and Eden.

In the meanwhile certain details have now become known through confidential channels, which would appear to confirm the accuracy of this supposition. According to this information the conversations were, in fact, kept within the limits desired by Britain and scarcely touched upon the operational field. On the contrary they chiefly consisted in the exchange of information as to the armed forces which could be made available in the event of a German attack on France and Belgium, that is to say, in the exchange of information on factors of which the several General Staffs were already aware in the main, if not in detail. Thus for instance, and this is a matter of definite knowledge, the British told the two other parties to the talks no more, as regards air forces, than what was already apparent from the *Air Force List*.

As regards operational questions, it has been possible to ascertain with some degree of certainty that the conversations dealt only with the general deployment area. In this connexion the French are said to have wanted an extension of the Maginot Line through Belgium and to have demanded deployment preparations for a British expeditionary

<sup>4</sup> Deputy Chief of the Belgian General Staff.

<sup>5</sup> For the text of this communiqué see *The Times* of Apr. 20, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 251 and footnote 11 thereto.

army on the left flank. This was, however, refused by the British, whilst the existing possibilities of disembarkation ports on the far side of the Channel were only very lightly touched upon. On the other hand the Dutch area is said not to have been mentioned in this connexion. With regard to the conduct of war at sea, the talks are said to have dealt with a division of sea areas. According to an extremely good source, it has indeed been decided to assign the North Sea areas to the French Navy and to allow the British Navy to exercise naval supremacy in the Mediterranean for the event of the worst contingency under discussion occurring [*für den akuten Besprechungsfall*]. Although this may not have been envisaged beforehand by the British, the general politico-naval situation had already postulated such a division, so that there was some reason for its retention in future. A solution of this kind also accords most nearly with general British naval interests in the Mediterranean. On the other hand, as has been established with a considerable degree of certainty, the British refused to discuss any plans with regard to the operational employment of the Air Force. It is also said that no exchange of information on the performance and possible methods of employment of the various Air Force units took place.

Of the facts which have become known in connexion with the General Staff talks, it is politically of importance to us that the Netherlands were not discussed and, furthermore, that within the framework of these talks no attempt was made to get into touch in any way with the Soviet Russians on this subject.

Although, according to the above, primarily due to the British reserve, the outcome of the General Staff talks can at present scarcely be considered to be of any practical importance apart from the psychological effect of extensively reassuring French public opinion, yet we must see a certain element of political danger, if only in the fact of the conversations being held at all.<sup>7</sup>

By order:  
D[IECKHOFF]

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<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in an unidentified handwriting: "N.B.: Sources: II M 1242 g., II M 1325 g., II M 1416 g." These are respectively documents Nos. 290 and 303, and a report by the Military and Air Attaché in Paris of May 6 (5606/E401840).



## No. 341

*Herbert L. W. Göring<sup>1</sup> to Ambassador Schulenburg*

BERLIN-DAHLEM, May 20, 1936.

DEAR COUNT:<sup>2</sup> After repeated conversations about how essential, in Germany's present situation, business with the Russians must indeed be with regard to the whole question of obtaining raw materials and foreign exchange and providing employment,<sup>3</sup> I succeeded a few days ago in persuading my cousin, Colonel General Göring, to receive the two gentlemen from the Russian Trade Mission, Kandelaki and Friedrichson, in connexion with the new Treaty which was signed recently.<sup>4</sup> Their visit to the Colonel General passed off in a very pleasant and almost friendly way, and Kandelaki and Friedrichson were in every respect delighted by the Colonel General's charming manner. I have drawn up a short memorandum about the visit, at which I was present and which lasted a bare half-hour, and thought it would doubtless also be of interest to you to see it. It seems to me particularly important that, as I myself was witness, Göring suggested to the Russians that if ever they had any wishes with which they were making no headway they should apply to him direct; he was prepared at all times to assist by word and deed. This naturally constituted a considerable success for the Russian gentlemen. Kandelaki, I hear, left for Moscow yesterday evening in order to report, among other things, on this most agreeable reception by Göring.

Although I am at present not unduly hopeful in this matter, yet I must admit that, after this very friendly conversation the ice did seem to me to have been to some extent broken, particularly since, at a

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum of May 19 (343/212180) addressed to Dieckhoff, Dirksen, who was at that time in Berlin, wrote: "A member of the board of Siemens told me yesterday that he had heard the following from the Referent in the Ministry of Economics, Herbert Göring:

"On Wednesday of last week, Herr Herbert Göring together with the Russian Trade Delegate in Berlin, Kandelaki, and some other members of the Russian Trade Delegation, was received by Minister President Göring. The latter expressed his pleasure at the conclusion of the Credit Agreement and added that Germany was ready to perform all supply contracts that the Soviet Union might place, including war material too. The Minister President added that he was also pleased about the conclusion of the Agreement because it would produce an economic *détente* and was the first step towards a political rapprochement.

"Thereupon the Trade Delegate, Kandelaki, left that same day for Moscow."  
Marginal notes by Dieckhoff on this memorandum read: (i) "[against the last sentence] "No. He called next day on Schacht, who poured some water into the wine". (ii) "[against the whole paper] President Schacht, by and large, told me the same thing yesterday. D[ieckhoff]. May 19".

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Bülow's handwriting after the word "COUNT": "(Schulenburg)."  
No covering document has been found to indicate how the document here printed and document No. 347 reached Bülow.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 260.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 302.



meeting a few days later, Göring also told various industrialists who brought up the subject with him how important for us the development of business with Russia was; he said he was quite convinced of this and had decided to discuss this subject sometime very seriously with the Führer, whose attitude to it, admittedly, was not very sympathetic. Let us therefore hope for the best in the matter.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours, etc.,

HERBERT L. W. GÖRING

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, May 13, 1936.

#### MINUTE

This morning MM. Kandelaki and Friedrichson of the USSR were, at my instance, received by the Minister President, Colonel General Göring. The reception passed off in extremely pleasant fashion. The Minister President was very amiable and emphasized to the Russians how pleased he was, in the interests of both Germany and Russia, about the signing of the new Treaty which had just taken place; this, he said, would also be a pacemaker on the road to further political understanding between these two great nations. All his efforts were directed towards making closer contacts with Russia again, politically too, and he thought that the best way would be through intensifying and expanding mutual trade relations. Economically the two countries could only be useful to each other; we needed Russian orders for our finished products and Russian raw materials; the Russians needed the products of the highly developed German industry and a market for their raw materials. He therefore welcomed the agreement most warmly and hoped that trade would continue to expand in an increasingly satisfactory fashion. When the Russians observed that they were unfortunately not always able to obtain what they wanted, Göring assured them that we Germans must of course realize that the Russians only bought from us those things which they could genuinely use. He was prepared to throw all his influence into the balance so that the Russians should obtain in future everything they required from Germany, with the qualification of course that, firstly, we could not supply what we were manufacturing in strict secrecy for ourselves and for our own use and were not exporting at all, nor, secondly, what we still needed now for our own requirements during the period of large-scale conversion. The gentlemen would, of course, appreciate that. Recently Germany could repeatedly have transacted very important deals in supplies of arms; she had had, however, to refuse them all, since for the moment Germany must continue to be concerned with her own requirements. However, he saw that the moment would

soon be close at hand when German requirements would have been met and when he would be glad to export arms too. When the Russians further interjected that they had been unable to obtain short-wave transmitters in the last few years, the Minister President replied that he could not judge of the matter without further enquiry, but that on principle he thought that there was nothing to prevent this. He would have a report made to him on the point and would gladly be at their disposal if required. Altogether, if the Russian gentlemen encountered difficulties in Germany or were faced with questions with which they were making no headway, he most cordially invited them to turn to him at any time. He was always ready to receive them and assist them by word and deed. He was convinced that the time was ripe to set in train more friendly relations between Russia and Germany all along the line, in both the economic and the political sphere.

HERBERT L. W. GÖRING

## No. 342

393/212176-77

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, May 22, 1936.

RM 445.

e.o. Pol. V 274.

The Russian Ambassador called on me today to say farewell before going on his leave, which he intends to spend in Carlsbad. He took the opportunity to enquire about our reply to the British questionnaire<sup>1</sup> and I told him that it was not yet certain what our reply would be. He then began to speak about the League of Nations, and said he thought that it was in great need of reform. He thought that perhaps Britain might be intending to link a reform of the League with the settlement of the Italo-Abyssinian dispute. But Suritz maintained silence as to the direction this reform might take.

I asked the Ambassador about Russia's attitude to the Dardanelles question. He replied that Russia had no objection to the remilitarization of the Dardanelles. With regard to the right of passage, she was certainly interested in not having the equilibrium in the Black Sea disturbed. At the impending negotiations<sup>2</sup> Turkey might well insist on the exercise of full sovereignty, and on reserving the right to decide about the passage of warships. Russia would not contest this claim.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 313.

<sup>2</sup> The Turkish Note of Apr. 10 (see document No. 277) having been favourably received by all Powers signatory to the Lausanne Convention of 1923, with the exception of Italy, the Montreux Conference was set to meet on June 22.

With regard to the composition of the Italo-British dispute over Abyssinia, the Ambassador took the view that this would probably be based on the 1906 Treaty,<sup>3</sup> and that Britain would eventually secure a predominant influence by granting credits, etc., and would bring about a reconciliation with Italy.

Finally, after expressing satisfaction over the conclusion of the German-Russian economic negotiations,<sup>4</sup> the Ambassador asked whether any change in political relations might be expected in the near future. I told him that I did not think that the pre-conditions for this existed at present but I hoped that political relations between Germany and Russia would also once again develop satisfactorily.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the Agreement between Great Britain, France and Italy respecting Abyssinia, signed at London Dec. 13, 1906, see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 99, pp. 486-490.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 302.

## No. 343

7203/E529772-73

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL  
2473

ROME, May 22, 1936  
Received May 29.  
Pol. IV 177.

Subject: Prince Starhemberg's visit to Rome.

Prince Starhemberg spent a few days in Rome last week-end. The occasion for his visit was a football match between an Austrian and an Italian team, at which, by the way, it came to the most rowdy clashes between the players as well as between the public and the Austrians. Prince Starhemberg was received by Mussolini during his visit here. As I learn from a good source, he told Mussolini that he had no intention of resting content with his enforced withdrawal from the Government,<sup>1</sup> but that, on the contrary, he would take up the fight and he even hinted at the possibility of a *coup d'état*. Mussolini counselled moderation, first, because further disturbances in Europe were not wanted now and secondly because the army and the police in Austria were against Starhemberg, and therefore an attempt at a *coup d'état* would have no prospect of success. How far Starhemberg will follow the advice he has been given remains to be seen.

Despite Mussolini's negative attitude towards Starhemberg's alleged plans for drastic action, I have the impression that Mussolini does not

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 325, footnote 1.

intend to drop Starhemberg, who was regarded here as Italy's truest friend in the Austrian Government, and that he is reckoning with the possibility, if not even with the probability, of Starhemberg's returning. His resignation, apart from differences of a personal and internal political nature with Herr von Schuschnigg, is attributed to British influence in Vienna.<sup>2</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>2</sup> In a letter of May 16 (1744/402777-78) Mackensen wrote to Renthe-Fink from Budapest that "now the whole plan has been dropped [see document No. 311] if only because G[ömbös] is out of action for some while and St[arhemberg] has left the ship", and asked for information about a possible alternative plan of Göring passing through Budapest. The following marginal notes appear on this document: (i) "This concerns the Göring-Starhemberg meeting originally planned by the Hungarian side. Nothing is known here yet about the possibility of R[eich] M[inister] Göring's passing through Budapest, mentioned at the end of the letter. R[enthe-]F[ink], May 25." (ii) (in Lorenz' handwriting): "cf. also yesterday's Brit[ish] report on an expected hunting visit by Göring to Budapest."

## No. 344

1946/435651-54

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram *en clair*

(Sent by special courier to save expense.)

No. 75 of May 23  
Report No. 2576<sup>1</sup>

ROME, May 23, 1936.  
Received May 24—4:00 p.m.  
Pol. VII 173.

With reference to your telegram No. 97 of May 20.<sup>2</sup>

(1) Mussolini opened today's conversation, at which Suvich was also present, by energetically dissociating himself from the Gayda article on the alleged virtual recognition of the annexation of Abyssinia by the the non-sanctionist States whose representatives were present at the Palazzo Venezia.<sup>3</sup> The remark, he said, was nonsensical in itself, and had been damaging in its effect. I agreed and emphasized that to my own knowledge Italy had not yet asked for recognition from anybody, certainly not from us. This Mussolini expressly confirmed, whereupon I made statements about our attitude in accordance with your despatch Pol. VII 58.<sup>4</sup> In reply to my question, Mussolini declared that the report of recognition by Austria was just as false as the assertion, made later, that Britain had protested against this

<sup>1</sup> The report number was evidently added when it was decided to send the document here printed by courier.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 339.

<sup>3</sup> In an article, published in the *Giornale d'Italia* on May 12, Gayda had asserted that the presence during the annexation ceremonies at the Palazzo Venezia (see document No. 318) of the diplomatic representatives of Germany, Japan, Brazil, Austria, Hungary and Albania amounted to a virtual recognition by these countries of the *fait accompli* created by Italy.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 335.



recognition by Austria. On the other hand he admitted that Hungary's applying the trade treaty to Abyssinia was, in practice, tantamount to recognition. I then said that, with the full concurrence of my Government, I would be happy to inform him of the present position over the treatment of the British questionnaire<sup>5</sup> and, emphasizing throughout that this was not an official statement of views, I expounded in detail the points set forth in your despatch R II 1277 of May 9,<sup>6</sup> and cipher letter Pol. I 10 of May 15.<sup>7</sup> Mussolini took the opportunity of mentioning that, according to reliable information which he had furnished to Attolico too, the British Ambassador in Berlin was completely hostile to Germany—and not only to the Third Reich. I replied that I knew nothing of this; unfortunately, however, it sometimes happened that Ambassadors had such prejudices. Thus, for example, we had every reason to believe that in Paris Cerruti, too, was still displaying his aversion to us. Mussolini replied that only today he had received a most emphatic letter from Cerruti, in which he flatly denied all allegations of this kind. This letter was in reply to one which Mussolini had written to him, prompted by German allegations to this effect which had come to his ears, and in which he had asked Cerruti, in the event of the allegations being true, to refrain from anything of the kind. In the course of further discussion of the questionnaire Mussolini asked whether we would postpone our reply until after June 15.<sup>8</sup> When I replied that in any case we felt that any discussions could only be of value after the new French Cabinet had been constituted, he said he thought it might be expedient to go on putting off replying until after the League of Nations crisis had been resolved. Upon my remarking that any discussion about the exercise of German sovereign rights in the Rhineland Zone could no longer be entertained by us, he asked me what the position was with regard to fortifications. I replied that they came under the heading of sovereign rights. He signified approval of this and of most other aspects of our attitude. When I mentioned that the British questionnaire did, none the less, contain a measure of recognition of the need for opportunities for revision, I remarked that some astonishment had been felt in Germany over Mussolini's interview,<sup>9</sup> according to which Italy was now satisfied and was on the other side of the barricades. At this Mussolini laughed and said that surely we must see that these words had been merely to reassure somewhat the British and French who believed that Abyssinia was only an intermediate

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 313.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 317.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 326, footnote 2.

<sup>8</sup> Possibly a reference to the fact that the League Council at their meeting on May 11-13 had adopted a resolution postponing their next meeting until after June 15 and maintaining sanctions meanwhile.

<sup>9</sup> The reference is to Mussolini's interview on Mar. 5 with G. Ward Price of the *Daily Mail*; see document No. 315, footnote 7.

stage and that Italy now intended to raise further claims. His observation, he said, referred solely to Africa, and in any case Italy still remained a proletarian nation where international policy was concerned. It was, however, the case that he had no further claims whatsoever up his sleeve, and especially not in respect of Egypt or the Sudan. He had told the British so time and again, and had only recently repeated it. By and large he would much prefer, he said, to come to an understanding direct with the British about their mutual interests; the idea of a Mediterranean Locarno, however, as enunciated by Paris<sup>10</sup> was impracticable as far as he was concerned, since it would only mean a new form of imposing fetters on Italy. He was, he said, watching developments in French policy with the greatest anxiety. From a conversation which had come to his knowledge between Léger, the real wire-puller, Blum and other politicians, it was clear that Léger wished to build up French policy on the basis of the closest cooperation with Britain and Soviet Russia, a cooperation in which the Little Entente would also join and which was designed to bring Italy and Germany to heel. In reply I made a few observations regarding our attitude towards Soviet Russia and the British interest in this question. Mussolini noted with satisfaction that the Führer did not intend to enter into any commitments other than those he had offered, and added that one of Britain's chief aims was to bring in Soviet Russia. Hereupon I expatiated, on the lines of your despatch Pol. V 49 G of May 19,<sup>11</sup> on the appearance, which had of late frequently been created, of a *rapprochement* between Italy and Soviet Russia. Mussolini replied that opposition to us and, above all, fear of us, were the mainspring of Soviet Russia's policy; this readily explained Russia's tactical moves, in the form of hints about the abolition of sanctions, to prevent Italy from entering into a close understanding with Germany.<sup>12</sup> In any case, he said, this was totally lacking in realism, for in fact Russia had put forward no proposals at Geneva, even this last time, for the abolition of sanctions nor, in his opinion, would she do so next time either. Suvich added that, at all events, there had now been a formal proposal by Chile<sup>13</sup> which Vasconcellos<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> The reference is presumably to the idea, sponsored by the States of the Balkan Entente, of a Mediterranean pact to include Britain, France, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey. For reports on this plan see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. III, pp. 138-139, 141-142 and 158.

<sup>11</sup> Document No. 334, which was sent to Rome under this file number.

<sup>12</sup> See also document No. 324.

<sup>13</sup> At the League Council Meeting of May 11-13, the delegates of Ecuador and Chile had declared an objection to the maintenance of sanctions. In a memorandum, dated May 18, 1936, and addressed to the Governments of the United States, of South and Central America and of the States Members of the League of Nations, the Chilean Government put forward suggestions for the reform of the League Covenant and stated that, unless the Covenant was reformed, Chile would cease to be a member. (See *The Times* of June 9, 1936.)

<sup>14</sup> Chairman of the League Coordinating Committee and of the smaller "Committee of Eighteen" set up by the former on Oct. 11, 1935 (see document No. 324, footnote 3).

and Britain would not be able to get round. Mussolini was of the opinion that Britain's attitude was still undecided and that it changed from day to day. Generally speaking, he said, the feeling against sanctions was gaining ground; it would be the *chef d'œuvre* of British policy, he added, if, after all that had happened, France were in the end to be branded as the scapegoat.

(2) We then came to speak about Austria. Mussolini told me about Starhemberg's visit.<sup>15</sup> He had urged him, he said, to exercise restraint and to observe an attitude of benevolent neutrality towards Schuschnigg. This seemed to have made an impression on Starhemberg and he had promised to conduct himself accordingly. Whether he would or not, was another question. He himself had, however, he said, the impression that Schuschnigg would now set up a very strong, authoritarian system, tantamount to a dictatorship. Schuschnigg was a strong character for whom he had great respect, even though he was, of course, a pupil of the Jesuits. I then spoke in the sense of the instructions contained in your telegram No. 97<sup>2</sup> whereupon Mussolini said that he thought that, if Schuschnigg succeeded in getting his own way, he would within a few months be the very man to bring into being a *modus vivendi* with Germany, as he himself had recently urged him to do in Rome. I replied that to me the situation in Austria still seemed extremely confused and unstable, and that the question of an autochthonous Austrian National-Socialism was still of decisive importance. In any case, however, we had to wait for Vienna to take the initiative. I was myself certain that 99 per cent of the Austrian people desired, above all, to see their differences with the Reich removed. Mussolini did not contest this and said he thought that, in view of our common race and common language, an understanding must surely be possible.

(3) In conclusion, I urgently requested Mussolini to bring pressure to bear on the competent authorities to settle our complaints regarding the violation of the German-Italian Trade Agreement,<sup>16</sup> which I described in detail. I emphasized that the situation in this respect was now serious and that the political aspect should not be lost sight of either. Mussolini stated that he was fully aware of the latter consideration; he had no desire whatever, after the door of German-Italian trade had remained open all through the long months of sanctions, to see a trade policy dispute break out now. He would discuss things in detail with Guarneri<sup>17</sup> on Wednesday and would stress this aspect of the matter.

HASSELL

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<sup>15</sup> See document No. 343.

<sup>16</sup> The reference is to the treaty of April 16, 1935, and to the first supplementary Agreement signed at Munich on Dec. 20, 1935, see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 67, with footnote 2 thereto, and Editors' Note, p. 930.

<sup>17</sup> Under Secretary of State for Foreign Exchange and Currency. Wednesday was May 27.



## No. 345

3610/E026872

*Memorandum by the State Secretary*BERLIN, May 25, 1936.  
Pol. I 219.

The French Ambassador<sup>1</sup> told me today that it would be very regrettable if our reply to the British questionnaire<sup>2</sup> were to be made only after Whitsun.<sup>3</sup> If we were to give our answer before Whitsun, then Léon Blum<sup>4</sup> would be compelled to declare his attitude towards it in his governmental statement.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> André François-Poncet.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> In 1936 Whit-Sunday fell on May 31.

<sup>4</sup> Léon Blum, President of the French Socialist Party, took office at the head of a Government composed of Socialists and Radicals, with Communist support (*Front Populaire*), on June 4, 1936.

## No. 346

218/147866-68

*Memorandum by the Ambassador to Japan*

SECRET

BERLIN, May 25, 1936.  
W VII OA 90.

I tried yesterday, from Reichenhall, to arrange a conversation with General von Reichenau in Munich, but I heard there that he was away on an official trip. I thereupon wrote him a letter of which the following is a copy:

"Dear Herr von Reichenau: Being in Reichenhall for a few days, I telephoned today to try to arrange to see you in Munich this evening on my way through—I must be back in Berlin tomorrow (Hotel Esplanade). Having heard that you were away on an official trip, I would like to try briefly to summarize in these lines what I would have liked to discuss orally with you.

"On my arrival in Germany two weeks ago, I was informed about the large-scale transaction which we are now planning with China, and



also about the purpose of the five-months' trip to China<sup>1</sup> which you are about to undertake. I have had various discussions about this at the Foreign Ministry and the War Ministry, and in particular with Field Marshal von Blomberg.<sup>2</sup> In this last conversation I began by saying that the transaction and your journey involved placing a serious strain upon our relations with Japan and that it was necessary in Germany's political interest—since nothing could alter the fact of the transaction having been concluded—to keep to a minimum the harmful repercussions on Japan. These repercussions could be diminished, I said, if your journey were not confined to China and could thus lose the character of one-sided military advice to China and so of being directed against Japan. For this purpose it would be necessary for your journey to take the form of a Far Eastern study trip and to include Japan. I therefore suggested that you should also come to Japan in order to establish contact with the authorities there and by frank conversations to diminish Japanese mistrust of our Chinese plans. I advocated that you should begin your trip to Japan as soon as possible, to avoid exaggerated rumours stemming from waterfront gossip and intrigues reaching Japan and taking root there.

“Herr von Blomberg agreed in principle with my suggestion, with the reservation that the trip to Japan should take place in agreement with Marshal Chiang Kai-shek; the purpose of your journey to China must not be jeopardized. If Chiang Kai-shek raised no objections and if he allowed himself to be convinced that your journey to Japan served, in the last analysis, to promote and safeguard the purpose of your journey to China, then he—Herr von Blomberg—would agree to your journey to Japan.

“The first purpose of this letter is to inform you of this conversation in case you have not already been informed about it directly, and the second is to ask you to do your utmost to bring about this journey to Japan. It seems to me the sole and the most efficacious way of preventing our relations with Japan from being seriously prejudiced. I would have liked to explain to you by word of mouth how great is the political and economic importance of these relations.

“Unfortunately it will presumably no longer be possible to arrange for us to have a conversation before your departure, since—so I have heard—you are leaving as early as the 29th. I can be reached in Berlin until May 27.

“I also much regret that should you go to Japan I shall not be able to welcome you there as I do not propose to return until October. In Colonel Ott, however, you would have at your side a very experienced

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 306.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 338. No other record of Dirksen's discussions in the Foreign Ministry or War Ministry have been found.

adviser, with a thorough knowledge of all Far Eastern problems. He would also be able to give you information—by telegram if necessary—through Fischer *via* the Embassy.

With every good wish for your journey,  
cordial greetings and Heil Hitler,

Yours, etc.,

VON DIRKSEN"

Herewith submitted for information  
*via* Senior Counsellor von Erdmannsdorff  
to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff<sup>3</sup>  
and State Secretary von Bülow.

VON DIRKSEN

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "I have talked to Herr von Reichenau and General Beck about this in Bad Liebenstein. Herr von Reichenau will *only* go to China; he saw no point in a trip to Japan; it would not help much in Japan and would cause serious reactions in China. Reichenau obviously knew nothing about the Blomberg suggestion that Chiang Kai-shek should be brought into the matter; it was not mentioned.

"I am of the opinion that the journey—since it is going to take place anyway—should be restricted to *China*. The trip to Japan would only cause confusion. Reichenau is leaving the day after tomorrow. D[ieckhoff], May 26."

## No. 347

2092/452531

*Ambassador Schulenburg to Herbert Göring*

May 25, 1936.

DEAR HERR GÖRING: Allow me to express to you my warmest gratitude for your kind letter of May 20<sup>1</sup> and particularly for sending me your extremely interesting memorandum. It was very kind of you to think of letting me know immediately and directly.

I fully appreciate how important it is that the Colonel General should be interested in the matters in question and should show so much understanding for them. This will make our work very much easier. It is unfortunately the case that it is very hard for us to do without the Russian raw materials. I too am of the opinion that, in the interests of our economic requirements, our general relations with the Soviet Union could be placed on a somewhat more friendly basis without our basic political principles having to be modified in consequence.

Once again many thanks for your letter. With my cordial greetings and with Heil Hitler!

I am, my dear Herr Göring,

Yours, etc.,

(SCHULENBURG)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 341.

<sup>2</sup> This name has been written in by Bülow (cf. document No. 341, footnote 2).

## No. 348

3610/E026883-84

*Memorandum by Ambassador Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, May 26, 1936.

Pol. I 402.

The British Ambassador, Sir Eric Phipps, had made an appointment to see me this morning. By way of introduction he remarked that, in the Reich Foreign Minister's absence, he had come to me to inform me that the British Government would greatly welcome it if the German reply to the British Note of May 6<sup>1</sup> could be given as soon as possible. He asked me to convey this, the British Government's desire, to the Reich Chancellor too. He said that in their last conversation<sup>2</sup> the Reich Chancellor had held out the prospect of a German reply as soon as the formation of a new French Government was in sight. This had meanwhile become the case.

I told the British Ambassador in reply that the German side were closely studying the British questions, since they embraced an enormous political complex concerning which there were as many opinions as there were States. As far as I could remember, the Reich Chancellor had stated that the German reply would probably be given *after* the new French Government had been formed. In any case the Reich Chancellor and the Reich Foreign Minister would not be returning to Berlin until after Whitsun.<sup>3</sup> I myself would also be absent over Whitsun. A German reply would therefore only be given after the holidays.

I then went on to set forth once again to Sir Eric Phipps our views in the sense in which the Führer had explained them to Phipps in their most recent conversation. We too were much concerned to have the great treaty structure completed as soon as possible. Precisely for this reason, however, we wished to avoid any steps which might result in hindering rather than facilitating the negotiations. The British Government, for their part, had published their Note and thus the exchange of views had assumed the character of a German-British dialogue. We would therefore also be publishing our reply and in view of our previous experience with a section of the world press, which distorted everything that came out of Germany one would have to make allowance for this. Moreover, I had heard that Léon Blum intended to make a foreign policy statement once the Government had been formed which might perhaps help to clarify the position.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 326.

<sup>3</sup> In 1936, Whit-Sunday fell on May 31.

Sir Eric Phipps repeated that the British side attached great importance to an early start of the discussions, since, of the four months of the interim period, two months would soon have passed. He then asked me whether we had already considered what place might be suitable for holding conversations and/or a conference.

I replied that we had not yet considered this question. Moreover, it was, in my opinion, too early to speak of this yet, since a number of preliminary questions needed to be clarified before such conversations could take place.

V. RIBBENTROP

## No. 349

4602/E190251

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 27, 1936.

The Belgian Minister<sup>1</sup> told me yesterday—as being very important in his view—that the Netherlands Government had approached the Belgian Government about a mutual exchange of views on the German proposal for a new Locarno. The Netherlands Government were inclined to participate provided that they would not be called upon to accept any obligations, either as a guarantor or in any other way. Belgium, the Minister thought, was in much the same position, and he hoped that a new Locarno would come into being, in which the territorial integrity of both countries would be guaranteed without their being called upon to assume any obligations to give military aid or anything of that sort. Belgium's pre-war neutrality he said, had been an ideal condition.

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Vicomte Davignon.

## No. 350

7961/E574869

### *Memorandum by the State Secretary*

BERLIN, May 27, 1936.

Pol. I 228.

The Italian Ambassador has learnt through a telegram from his Government that the King of Rumania is in possession of reliable information to the effect that the future French Minister President, Blum, has proposed to the British Government that sanctions should



be imposed on Germany if the latter did not give France full satisfaction in regard to Locarno and the Rhineland. In exchange he has offered not only to maintain sanctions against Italy but, if necessary, to make them more severe.<sup>1</sup>

BÜLOW

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "I do not believe this. [This is] an Italian attempt to yoke us to the Italian wagon. Rome, Paris, London and Bucharest are to be informed. D[ieckhoff], May 28." These Missions were informed accordingly by despatch of May 30 (3610/E026878).

## No. 351

2019/443755-57

### *The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

SECRET

A 2869

VIENNA, May 27, 1936.

Received May 29.

Pol. IV 245.

Subject: Further development of the internal political situation.

On Sunday, May 24, a conversation took place at the residence of Lieutenant General Muff<sup>1</sup> between President of the Senate Mannlicher, Lieutenant Field Marshal von Bardolff and myself at which the programme to be laid before Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg by Herr Mannlicher was discussed in detail. Since, from the start, I took the view that the appointment of a representative of the National Opposition as a member of the Cabinet would be of use only if a precisely defined programme regarding the course to be followed in future were agreed between him and the Federal Chancellor and set down in writing, we have plainly set forth in this memorandum<sup>2</sup> the course to be taken in future by the Austrian Government in the sphere of foreign and domestic politics.

President of the Senate Mannlicher, who saw the Federal Chancellor two days ago when he had a further general conversation with him, will send him the memorandum today. On Friday there is to be a discussion between him and the Chancellor on the programme. Depending upon the outcome of this exchange of views, I shall probably be in a position to make an oral report next week.

As it is in the air that the Federal Chancellor will strive to strengthen the basis of his Government on one side or the other, all kinds of speculation is current here in Vienna regarding the possibility of a German-Austrian understanding. Nothing definite about the Chancellor's intentions or the content of the discussions has, however, become known yet, as the Federal Chancellor has not, as I have been able to

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<sup>1</sup> The German Military Attaché.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

establish, taken any of his Ministerial colleagues into his confidence. I request, therefore, that the matter should be dealt with very confidentially from the Berlin end too.

I hear from Heimwehr circles that in the meantime an understanding has been arrived at between Starhemberg and Fey. Whilst the dethronement of Starhemberg<sup>3</sup> had at first been received with a certain amount of satisfaction because it was believed that he would have more freedom of action outside the Government to carry out the Fascist programme, this has now been followed by a rather dejected mood. It is believed that at first those leaders and deputy leaders of the Heimwehr movement with Catholic sympathies, with the present Vice Chancellor Baar-Barenfels at their head, will provisionally submit to the Federal Chancellor. As regards the "opposition group" of the Heimwehr, the Government probably hope to "wear it down" gradually but systematically, whilst avoiding any open conflict.

The only difficulty for Schuschnigg lies in the as yet unascertainable attitude of Mussolini towards the Heimatschutz.

The "Freiheitsbund" will again organize a great parade in Stockerau on June 14. I regard it as very important further to strengthen our relations with it, as the leaders are completely following our line. I therefore venture to request the earliest possible decision with regard to the request contained in my report No. A 2544 of May 12, 1936.<sup>4</sup> It would be important for at least part of the amount to be placed at my disposal as early as possible.

PAPEN

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 325, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 319. A handwritten marginal note against this paragraph reads: "Has in the meantime been decided by the R[eich] C[hancellor] in an affirmative sense."

## No. 352

7219/E530167-69

### *The State Secretary to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 101 of May 28

BERLIN, May 28, 1936—9:20 p.m.

Received May 28—11:40 p.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 75,<sup>1</sup> paragraph 3, and your telephoned report.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 344.

<sup>2</sup> No direct record has been found but it emerges from Hassell's telegram No. 78 of May 29 (5642/E410953) and the Foreign Ministry's reply, telegram No. 106 of June 3 (5642/E410950-52), that the reference is to Rome despatch 2480 of May 26 (7219/E530161-66) which had crossed with the document here printed. This despatch reported a conversation between Secretary of Legation Schmidt-Krutina and Guarneri concerning Italian breaches of the economic treaty at which Guarneri had proposed submitting the whole complex of questions to negotiation in Rome in the second week of June.

[1] You should point out to Mussolini<sup>3</sup> that, in dealing with German-Italian economic relations, Guarneri is by no means abiding by the directives he [Mussolini] has given, but is, on the contrary, even in those cases where there is no doubt of an Italian breach of treaty opposing a settlement which would even in some small degree satisfy us and accord with the Treaty.<sup>4</sup> You should say that we are in principle prepared to discuss with Guarneri in detail the preconditions and the programme for the joint session of the two Government Committees which he proposes, but that this conversation will have no prospects of success if Guarneri persists in his opposition.

(2) Should Mussolini promise to give Guarneri the appropriate instructions once again, I beg that the latter be spoken to somewhat as follows: We are extremely surprised that, after Germany has in recent years taken Italian requirements into generous account when organizing her trade, the Italian Government should not now be prepared to abide by the agreements reached in December. We consider that a joint session of the Government Committees would only have prospects of success if it had been ascertained beforehand that the Italian Government are basically prepared to keep to the obligations undertaken by them with regard to preventing normal German imports from being displaced by the import of war materials, to the application of the permit [*Bolletten*] system, to the granting of additional quotas, and to paying for the additional imports through the special account provided for in the agreement of December 20, 1935. We should, above all, require, before the meeting starts, a clear promise from the Italian Government with regard to paying for additional imports through the special account in accordance with the Munich agreements, as otherwise agreement will be out of the question. Should Guarneri be willing to make definite declarations in this connection, then I would request that he be told that we are prepared to allow the meeting to take place. In view of the fact that the chairman and several of the members of the German delegation cannot easily be spared, we would suggest Berlin as the venue for the negotiations. Only if Guarneri should propose himself to conduct negotiations or at least to play an important part in them, should we, since he cannot come to Berlin and since the last negotiations took place in Germany, be prepared, in spite of considerable difficulty, to come to Italy. As a date at which to open negotiations the end of the second week in June might be considered.

In order to avoid misunderstandings I would point out that it was

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Hassell's handwriting: " ? They have evidently not realized in Berlin that I have already been to M[ussolini]."

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the Treaty of Apr. 16, 1935, and to the first supplementary Agreement signed at Munich on Dec. 20, 1935; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 67 with footnote 2 thereto, and Editors' Note, p. 930.

agreed at Munich not that additional imports should be paid for in foreign exchange, but that, under Article 5, there was merely reserved the method of payment, in particular each case was to be settled individually, payment in goods equivalent to foreign exchange being primarily envisaged. Since a detailed discussion on this question does not at present appear to offer prospects of success, it would suffice for the Italians to promise that payment for additional deliveries would be settled in accordance with Article 5 of the supplementary agreement of December 20.

You should report by telegram.<sup>5</sup>

BÜLOW

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<sup>5</sup> See footnote 2 above. The Committees eventually met in Rome during the second half of June; see document No. 398.

### No. 353

3873/E034522

#### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 44 of May 29

PRAGUE, May 29, 1936—4:10 p.m.

Received May 29—5:25 p.m.

Pol. IV 262.

In order not to hinder the attempt at reconciliation amongst the Sudeten Germans,<sup>1</sup> I would urgently request you to prevail upon the Ministry of Propaganda to desist for the time being from publishing any reports about happenings within the Sudeten German Party.<sup>2</sup>

EISENLOHR

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<sup>1</sup> After the electoral successes of Konrad Henlein's Sudeten German Party (SdP) in May 1935 (see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 99), disputes had arisen within this party involving various personalities and groups, more especially Dr. Walther Brand, formerly a leading member of the *Kameradschaftsbund*, and a group of former members of the German National Socialist Workers' Party (DNSAP) of Czechoslovakia (voluntarily dissolved in October 1933). See also documents Nos. 364 and 372.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Discussed with Counsellor Wolf, of the Press [Department], who informed me that everything had already been arranged with Promi [Propaganda Ministry] withholding publication. A[ltenburg], May 30."



## No. 354

7215/E530084-87

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Cipher Letter

2661

ROME, May 29, 1936.

At a chance meeting I asked Suvich about the meaning of the British journalists' visit to Mussolini, the *Daily Telegraph* interview<sup>1</sup> and Grandi's conversations in London<sup>2</sup> and in particular whether some Italian initiative for a solution of the conflict might be expected. Suvich stated that as long as sanctions continued the reply to the latter part of my question was in the negative. The purpose of Mussolini's statements was solely to stress again and again that, apart from Abyssinia, Italy had no intention of pursuing any further imperialist plans and would respect those British and French interests which had been guaranteed by treaty. Italy's views were as follows. To make progress it was first of all necessary to remove the sanctions. This claim was fully justified, since the cessation of hostilities and the voluntary withdrawal of the Negus had created a completely new situation. The object of sanctions, namely, to prevent war or to force an end of hostilities, had disappeared. If the sanctions were removed, then Italy would regard this as a gesture which created a new atmosphere and in a new atmosphere she would be fully disposed to have talks. I asked what prospects Italy could hold out in such an event; if nothing positive were offered in this respect, I would find it somewhat difficult to imagine that this procedure would prove very attractive to the other side. Suvich replied that this could not be discussed yet; nothing could, of course, effect any substantial change in the *faits accomplis*, but, given that this basis was accepted, there was plenty of room for discussion. In reply to my question as to what he thought of the chances of the Geneva negotiations in the middle of June,<sup>3</sup> he said that at least a positive proposal to remove the sanctions had been submitted by Chile. Meanwhile, there was a certain danger that the discussion would be referred to the Coordination Committee which, as was known, was more or less identical with the League of Nations Assembly, so that it was likely to be convened in the autumn together with the Assembly.

I pointed out to Suvich that Germany's behaviour towards the British

<sup>1</sup> On May 28, 1936, the *Daily Telegraph* published the text of an interview granted by Mussolini to its diplomatic correspondent.

<sup>2</sup> It had been announced in the press that Grandi had called on Sir Robert Vansittart, Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, on May 21 and on the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Eden, on May 28.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 324, footnote 2.

questionnaire<sup>4</sup> was, in effect, very favourable to Italy since it pressed for a clarification of the present political confusion which had arisen as a result of the sanctions policy. Suvich fully acknowledged this.

I then asked Suvich whether he had also informed the British of the views he had expounded to me. Suvich replied that they were not actually negotiating on this subject with the British direct, yet he had explained these Italian views to all the others interested, especially to the Russians and French. Grandi's conversations in London related to the Negus' impending visit<sup>5</sup> which must be viewed with misgivings in Rome. Nevertheless, Vansittart had discussed the matter sensibly and moderately with Grandi and had indicated that it was intended as far as possible to (the following in French) *étouffer* this visit.

In conclusion, Suvich asked me whether I had had any fresh news from Austria; he had heard that Schuschnigg and Papen had had two somewhat lengthy conversations; I replied that I knew nothing about this.

HASELL

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 313, 326 and 339.

<sup>5</sup> On May 23 the Emperor of Ethiopia left Jerusalem for England, where he arrived on June 3, 1936.

## No. 355

1622/388080-84

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2241

LONDON, May 29, 1936.

Pol. I 243.

Subject: Conversation with Foreign Secretary Eden about the construction of the two German "A"-class cruisers.

The Foreign Secretary Eden let me know yesterday that he wished to discuss the naval question with me this afternoon, and he received me this afternoon in the Foreign Office in the presence of Mr. Craigie.

Mr. Eden stated that he had asked me to come and see him in order that he might communicate to me, for transmission to the German Government, the British Memorandum<sup>1</sup> with annex<sup>2</sup> (both enclosed with this report), in reply to the German Memorandum of May 4, 1936,<sup>3</sup> which was recently communicated by the German Naval Attaché in London to Under Secretary of State Craigie.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Printed as the enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1622/388076-79). This set out the German assurances on "A"-class cruiser construction, contained in the Summary of Discussions of June 23, 1935, the German Memoranda of Aug. 31, 1935, and Feb. 26, 1936, and the British Memoranda of July 4, 1935, and of Oct. 16, 1935. See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 165, 273 enclosure, 585, 193 enclosure and 273, footnote 6.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 309.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 337.

Mr. Eden then gave me a brief *résumé* of the British reply and spoke most earnestly of the grave consequences which he feared would arise, if Germany insisted on constructing the two "A"-class cruisers as announced. The German Note had been discussed the day before yesterday by the Cabinet and had left a most unfavourable impression on all members of the Cabinet. When the Foreign Secretary had finished, Under Secretary of State Craigie intervened and, in a lengthy statement on the lines of the enclosed British Memorandum and of his conversation with me (see our telegram No. 96 of May 13),<sup>5</sup> drew attention to the British objections.

I should at this point say that this morning Ambassador von Ribbentrop had an exhaustive conversation on the same problem with the First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Monsell, Mr. Craigie also being present, and that when I met him after the discussion, Herr von Ribbentrop detailed to me the arguments he had used.

I therefore began by drawing attention to this conversation between Lord Monsell and Herr von Ribbentrop and said, just as the latter had done, that the 35 per cent ratio of the German to the British fleet constituted the fundamental principle of German-British naval relations; to this Germany would firmly adhere in all circumstances, and the new German Note, as the British Government would surely admit, did not alter this ratio at all. With regard to the building holiday for "A"-class cruisers to which we had agreed, I must, I said, point out that the Franco-Russian Military Alliance had also brought about a fundamental change to our disadvantage in the sphere of security at sea, which compelled us to make an increase in this class of ship.

While Eden and Craigie accepted the first of these arguments, they vigorously contested the validity of the second, declaring that France had not altered her cruiser strength in "A"-class cruisers for the last five years and that Russia did not possess, and was not constructing, a single cruiser of this class. Herr von Ribbentrop had indeed mentioned that a cruiser of this class was being built in Italy for Russia, but this appeared to be a still completely unsubstantiated report, to which no credence was given here in Britain. Furthermore, by February 26, no one could any longer have doubted that the Franco-Russian Pact would be ratified.

It was conceivable, they said, that in deciding to lay down two further "A"-class cruisers, the German Reich Chancellor had not fully appreciated the exceptional importance which Britain attached to a building holiday for this category of cruiser. They had been trying for years to secure a building holiday for the "A"-class cruisers, and during the German-British naval conversations in the summer of last year the German representatives had been left in no doubt as to the great

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 323, footnote 1.



importance which Britain attached to an agreement of this kind among all the maritime Powers. In the German Memorandum of August 31, an extract from which was contained in the Annex,<sup>6</sup> it was categorically declared that the German Government would accept the building holiday, provided that a general agreement was reached before 1937 not to build any further vessels in this category. Subsequent to these German assurances, and on the basis of them, the negotiations then were initiated with the other maritime Powers. Although the British Government did not specifically state—particularly *vis-à-vis* the French Government—that Germany would be satisfied with the construction of two or perhaps three of these cruisers, this German assurance had nevertheless played a decisive part in that the French had declared their readiness to be content with the seven “A”-class cruisers they already had, provided that Germany did not build more than two. The third “A”-class cruiser claimed by Germany would certainly also be accepted by the French, who would, however, in the event of further German construction, undoubtedly claim an increase.

Thus, the German declarations, which were once again expressly confirmed in the German Government’s Memorandum of February 26<sup>7</sup> 1936, had constituted the basis for the achievement of the building holiday for “A”-class cruisers. If Germany for her part now raised the number from three to five, when no other Power was even laying down a cruiser of this class, then there was no doubt whatever that the building holiday for cruisers would fail to materialize and that an armaments race in this field would set in.

The Foreign Secretary closed the conversation with the request that the Memorandum be transmitted to Berlin. This I promised to do at once, adding that while I myself could not, of course, comment on his and Mr. Craigie’s statements, I would nevertheless bring them to the attention of my Government, in accordance with his wishes.

This conversation, as well as a short talk I had subsequently with Mr. Craigie, the information Ambassador Ribbentrop gave me with regard to his conversation with Lord Monsell, and a conversation which I had today with Lord Londonderry,<sup>8</sup> whom Lord Monsell had informed of the situation, all contribute to making it quite clear to me that Germany’s intention to build five instead of three “A”-class cruisers has caused very great displeasure here and that in consequence a serious threat to Anglo-German relations must undoubtedly be feared. Both in Eden’s words and apparently in those of Lord Monsell this morning one could repeatedly detect the accusation that Germany does not keep her word. In particular Mr. Craigie, who is, after all, extremely

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<sup>6</sup> See footnote 1 above. For the German memorandum of Aug. 31, 1936, see vol. iv of this series, document No. 273 enclosure.

<sup>7</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 585.

<sup>8</sup> Secretary of State for Air, 1931–1935.



friendly towards Germany, told me in our final talk that it was just this impression which was doing Germany immense harm here and which supplied grist to the mill of those—some of them in the Cabinet itself—who had always declared, precisely over German-British naval relations, that Germany would not abide by the agreements which had been concluded. If the German decision were implemented and the building holiday fell through as a result, wide circles here, also within the Navy, would take the view that in these circumstances the London Treaty as a whole had no further point, and, since agreement had already been reached between the major maritime Powers, they would place the blame for its ultimate failure to come into being on Germany. He therefore urgently begged us carefully to consider all the consequences of our step.

I enclose herewith a copy of the British Memorandum and of the Annex thereto. Ambassador von Ribbentrop has also retained one copy of each.<sup>9</sup>

BISMARCK

1622/388070-75

[Enclosure]<sup>10</sup>

Foreign Office, May 29, 1936.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have given careful consideration to the memorandum dated May 4th last in which the German Government communicate certain further observations in regard to the conclusion of an Anglo-German Naval Treaty similar to the multilateral Naval Treaty of March 25th, 1936.

2. In Sections 1 to 7 of this memorandum the German Government deal with a number of points relating to the practical bearing of the provisions of the proposed treaty on the Anglo-German Naval Treaty of June, 1935. These points, which it is not anticipated will give rise to any difficulty, will form the subject of a separate memorandum to be communicated shortly, and the purpose of the present memorandum is to deal with the serious and important issue raised in the concluding paragraphs of the German memorandum. In these paragraphs the German Government notify His Majesty's Government that, contrary to their previously expressed intention, they propose to lay down two Sub-Category A cruisers in addition to the three cruisers of this Sub-Category which are now under construction. The German Government had previously been prepared to limit their construction in this Sub-Category to three cruisers, provided that it proved possible to secure during the present year a general agreement for the suspension of building in this class of ship.

<sup>9</sup> A copy of this report was despatched by Dieckhoff to Neurath, then on holiday at Leinfelden, under a covering note of June 3 (1622/388086) stating that they were now awaiting Ribbentrop's return from London.

<sup>10</sup> This enclosure is in English in the original.

3. His Majesty's Government have learnt of this proposal with great regret, the more so as they had received the most explicit assurances from the German Government that, as part of her contribution to the securing of a general suspension of building in this class of ship, Germany would be prepared to limit her construction to three A class cruisers. From the paper annexed to this memorandum it will be seen that the assurances received from the German Government on this point were repeated over a period from June 1935 to February of this year and it was with the knowledge that these assurances had been given that His Majesty's Government conducted their negotiations with other Powers for a general agreement on a "holiday" in the construction of large cruisers. There is some reason to hope that other Governments may be prepared to renounce their right to further construction in this type if Germany will limit her construction to three vessels. At the time the Powers party to the 1936 Treaty accepted the scheme for a "holiday", Germany had only laid down two 8-inch gun cruisers and the acceptance of those Powers had been conditional on no further building of this type of vessel being undertaken by any Power, pending the entry into force of the Treaty. Nevertheless His Majesty's Government have some reason to hope that, so far as Germany is concerned, the building of a third A cruiser would not give rise to further construction in this Sub-Category elsewhere. They are, however, convinced that all further hope of securing a "holiday" in the construction of this type of vessel must be abandoned if Germany were now to decide to build in excess of the three ships originally contemplated. His Majesty's Government had understood that the German Government, like His Majesty's Government, were anxious to see a reduction made in the size and gun calibre of cruisers and they feel that they were entitled, on the basis of the very explicit assurances they had received, to assume that they would receive the continued support of the German Government in this matter.

4. In the memorandum under reference the German Government mention, as a reason for their change of attitude, the further developments which have occurred in the general situation; they speak of the enormous increase in armaments made by other naval Powers, the requirements of the national security of the Reich, the preponderance of the French Navy in A class cruisers, the development of the Russian navy, and the special significance acquired by this navy through the ratification of the Franco-Russian military alliance. His Majesty's Government have given careful consideration to the reasons thus adduced, but they are unable to see in what way they can be held to justify a departure by Germany from assurances solemnly conveyed to His Majesty's Government. So late as February 26th last the German Government stated that they were prepared to accept a building holiday in Sub-Category A cruisers for the duration of the Treaty and

that they would utilize otherwise the remaining 21,380 tons left to Germany in this category. It is difficult to believe that, during the intervening period, there can have been any appreciable increase in the naval armaments of other Powers. In point of fact, no capital ships or cruisers have, so far as is known, been laid down during this period by any European Power. So far as Category A cruisers themselves are concerned, none have been laid down in Europe since 1931, and it is clear that Germany, fortified by the experience gained since this type of ship was first constructed, has already acquired a considerable advantage in laying down three new cruisers in this Sub-Category five years later than the last ship to be laid down by a European country. As regards the preponderance of the French Navy in this Sub-Category of ship, it should be observed that the French strength has stood at seven since the completion of the "ALGERIE" in 1934 and that the assurances quoted in the accompanying annex were given by the German Government with the full knowledge of this fact.

5. Finally, the German memorandum speaks of the development now in full swing of the Russian navy, which is stated to have acquired special significance through the ratification of the Franco-Russian military alliance. His Majesty's Government are not aware that any new construction on a large scale has been undertaken recently by Soviet Russia and they think that any such considerable increase in construction could certainly not have taken place since February 26th last, when the last German assurance in regard to their A class cruisers was received. In particular there is no reason to believe that the Soviet Government have, during that interval, laid down any cruiser of Sub-Category A. It should, moreover, be pointed out that the Franco-Russian Treaty of Mutual Assistance was signed on May 2nd, 1935, that its ratification must, since that date, have been regarded by the German Government as a probability and that consequently, had they contemplated on this account so important a departure from their declared policy, His Majesty's Government would have been entitled to receive a warning to this effect before they embarked on discussions with other naval Powers. It may incidentally be mentioned that the debate in the French Chamber of Deputies on the bill for the ratification of the Franco-Soviet Pact had been in progress for several days prior to the last assurance given by the German Government on February 26th and was indeed finally concluded on February 27th.

6. It is understood from the German memorandum that the German Government fear that, as the sole naval Power restricted in a quantitative sense, the national security of the Reich may be affected if Germany limits her Sub-Category A cruiser construction to three vessels. His Majesty's Government cannot share this view, for the reasons set forth in the two preceding paragraphs, and they find it hard to believe that the German Government intend on such grounds to withdraw, without



agreement or even consultation with His Majesty's Government, the unconditional assurances which they had so recently given and which His Majesty's Government are fully entitled to consider as forming part of the general understanding between the two Governments in naval matters.

7. Nor is it clear to His Majesty's Government in what way Germany's relative naval strength would be improved by the step that the German Government now propose. On the contrary, the building by Germany of two further A cruisers would almost certainly lead to the breakdown of the "cruiser holiday", since it is to be assumed that France, Italy, and Soviet Russia will all build additional 8-inch gun cruisers in answer to Germany's additional constructions.

8. In all the circumstances and having regard to the explicit character of the assurances given to His Majesty's Government—assurances without which His Majesty's Government would not have attempted to arrange a cruiser "holiday" with other naval Powers—it is hoped that the German Government will reconsider their proposal and will be prepared, as their contribution to bringing the "holiday" into effect and on the understanding that the proposal for a holiday is similarly adopted by other naval Powers, to revert to their original intention of utilising for other purposes the 21,380 tons which will remain over if the German Government limit to three ships their construction in Sub-Category A cruisers.

## No. 356

9172/E645418-19

### *An Official of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics to an Official of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Transport<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, May 29, 1936.

On Wednesday<sup>2</sup> evening I had another opportunity of discussing the question of the negotiations with Poland on the transit traffic to East Prussia with Minister President Colonel General Göring. I submitted Ministerialrat Niemack's brief memorandum<sup>3</sup> to the Minister President and the Minister President decided that:

1) Although it is desirable to negotiate with Poland in a courteous and amicable fashion, it is, however, no longer so necessary as it seemed to be a few weeks ago, on account of considerations of foreign policy, to meet the Polish desires to so great an extent. Therefore it will not now

<sup>1</sup> This letter, found among the papers of the Embassy in Warsaw, was addressed to Ministerialdirektor Waldeck, head of the delegation for the regulation of the current transit traffic. (See also documents Nos. 261 and 264.)

<sup>2</sup> i.e., May 28.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.



do any harm if the negotiations are protracted and if an agreement is not reached promptly.

2) We cannot, of course, declare ourselves entirely in agreement with a rate of 1.6 now as compared with 1 previously. It should be made clear to the Poles that ultimately the whole root and cause of the differences with regard to the corridor traffic has lain in Germany's inability to make such payments. It should be pointed out to the Poles over and over again how unreasonable it is to demand that, as a result of the shorter route and of the undoubtedly much reduced Polish administrative expenses, we should in effect now pay a higher basic price than previously. The whole problem has arisen precisely because the cost of the traffic was too high. It would be illogical to end up with the basic prices being raised from 1 to 1.6.

3) On the other hand, we wish to avoid allowing this question to lead once more to the rupture of the corridor traffic, as long as the present obligation (traffic up to a limit of  $1\frac{1}{2}$  million [Reichsmark] per month) continues to hold good. If we do ultimately accept the basic figure of 1.6, then this should only be done for the period up to December 31, 1936, and we should at the same time indicate that we do not in principle recognize this Polish tariff and intend to bring up this question once again in connexion with the new settlement as from January 1, 1937.

Heil Hitler!

HERBERT L. W. GÖRING

## No. 357

1744/402751-53

### *The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

SECRET  
2951

VIENNA, May 30, 1936.  
Received June 6.  
Pol. IV 308.

Subject: A further conversation with the Federal Chancellor.

As announced in my report of two days ago,<sup>1</sup> President of the Senate Mannlicher yesterday discussed in detail with the Federal Chancellor the programme drawn up by us. I heard from President of the Senate Mannlicher that the exchange of views on the memorandum was in itself not unsatisfactory. However, he gained the impression that it has only now, in view of the comprehensive demands of the National Opposition, become really clear to the Federal Chancellor how great—and also how difficult for him—will be the step envisaged.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 351.

At noon today the Federal Chancellor invited me to come and have a further conversation. He said that he had very carefully examined the programme submitted to him by Herr Mannlicher and that, even if he did not completely approve of every part, it was at all events a basis for discussion. He was now leaving for Italy where he was going to have a few days' rest, and he would be seeing Mussolini at the end of the Whitsun week.

He could already tell me today that he had in any case decided on the following three measures.

1. To suppress the malicious gutter press;
  2. To fill a number of political posts with people from the National camp.
  3. An extensive amnesty for the National Socialists in July.
- He would carry out these measures, even if the conversations should lead to no understanding with the Reich.

I replied, as I had done previously, that such measures were certainly to be welcomed but that they alone would not afford a basis for concluding a comprehensive and lasting peace. The crucial problem was the cooperation of the National Opposition in shaping the political will of Austria. All other measures would only be palliatives.

I have the impression that the Federal Chancellor intends to discuss with Mussolini the situation and the possibility of concluding peace in order to obtain his approval for the concessions. On my repeatedly urging that a comprehensive programme should be laid down, he said that he would discuss it with me directly after his return on June 7.

Regarding yesterday's conference of Heimwehr leaders I learn from a reliable source that, for the present, the tactics of wait and see will be adopted.

May I suggest for your consideration that, possibly through our Ambassador in Rome, it should be made clear once again to Mussolini that the conclusion of a German-Austrian peace is conceivable only if there is a comprehensive settlement of the problem as a whole. If Mussolini really does desire an improvement in relations with the Reich, it is possible that he may give the somewhat vacillating Chancellor some good advice.<sup>2</sup>

PAPEN

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<sup>2</sup> A summary of the document here printed was sent for information to the Embassy in Rome in telegram No. 107 of June 4 (1744/402754-55), which also stated that, according to Attolico, Mussolini would shortly be seeing Schuschnigg in Forli.

## No. 358

L987/L283907-08

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassies in France, Great  
Britain and Italy, and to the Legation in Belgium*

Drafting Officer:  
Senior Counsellor Woermann.

BERLIN, May 31, 1936.  
zu V 7691.<sup>1</sup>  
zu R 838.

For information.

In a *Note Verbale* of May 11 (copy of which is enclosed)<sup>1</sup> the French Embassy in Berlin proposed in the customary form that the periods of office of the President and the other neutral members of the German-French Arbitration Commission,<sup>2</sup> which terminate on May 29, 1936, should be renewed for a further three years.

For the reply made orally to the French Ambassador see the memorandum of May 25<sup>3</sup> of which a copy is also enclosed.

In amplification of this it should be noted that the way in which this matter has been dealt with was determined partly by the consideration that, after the recognition of the German-French Arbitration Treaty of Locarno which would have been implicit in the renewal of the periods of office, the French Government might perhaps again have put forward the demand that the questions connected with the restoration of sovereignty in the Rhineland zone should be submitted to the methods of procedure provided for in the Arbitration Treaty and that they could then have construed a German refusal to do so as a fresh breach [of treaty] by Germany.

*Addition for Brussels:* Attention is specially drawn to the last paragraph of the memorandum of May 25.<sup>3</sup>

By order:  
GAUS

L987/L283905-06

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, May 25, 1936.  
R 838.

The French Ambassador, who had already spoken to me on Saturday about the Locarno Arbitration Commission, called on me today at my

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (L987/L283897-98).

<sup>2</sup> The commission set up under the terms of the German-French Treaty of Conciliation and Arbitration of Oct. 16, 1925. For the texts of the German-Belgian and German-French Arbitration Conventions and the German-Polish and German-Czechoslovak Arbitration Treaties signed at Locarno Oct. 16, 1925, see British White Paper, Cmd. 2525 of 1925: *Final Protocol of the Locarno Conference, 1925 (and Annexes) together with Treaties between France and Poland and France and Czechoslovakia*.

<sup>3</sup> See enclosure.

request. I told him that we would at present postpone replying to his *Note Verbale* of May 1 [*sic*—11], in expectation of the impending negotiations. It was unimportant if the set date of May 29 should have passed. Appointments which had run out were often only renewed after some delay. The legal position was that the Arbitration Convention was basically a convention designed to implement Article 3 of the Rhine Pact and had therefore, like the Rhine Pact, been prejudiced by the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet Alliance. We would therefore not reply to the French Note for the time being, in order not to have needlessly to adopt an attitude on the question of the validity or otherwise of the Arbitration Convention. It was clear from the German Peace Plan<sup>4</sup> that now, as previously, we believed in the concept of arbitration. The question of the Locarno Arbitration Treaty could therefore be settled without difficulty at the impending negotiations. We had no objections against the proposed personages as such.

The Ambassador objected that an interregnum of several months without an arbitration treaty would ensue. I replied that this was unimportant as for one thing the Arbitration Treaty had never been applied (which the Ambassador much regretted) and furthermore it was at all times possible to create an *ad hoc* arbitration tribunal, possibly from the members of the old Arbitration Council.

I told the Ambassador, for his personal information, that State Secretary (retd.) von Simson had resigned some while ago and that his place would presently have to be filled by some other German personage.

In the course of the conversation the French Ambassador asserted that we had declared in reply to a Belgian enquiry in March that the Locarno Arbitration Treaty remained valid and unaltered. I told him that this must be a case of error or incorrect information, for legally Belgium was in the same position as France; only the Czech and the Polish Arbitration Treaties were not bound up with the Rhine Pact and were therefore not affected by these developments; this we had stated in Prague<sup>5</sup> and Warsaw.

I consider it desirable that the Legation in Brussels be informed of these events and be instructed only to make use of this information if they are approached about it.

BÜLOW<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 242.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 256 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> In a *Note Verbale* of June 2 (L987/L283910-11) the French Embassy, on instructions, registered explicit reservations concerning the views expressed by Bülow (see enclosure) and stated that, as the French Government had not recognized the unilateral denunciation of Locarno by Germany, they held that the Arbitration Convention remained valid.



## No. 359

1427/363010-11

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 5, 1936.

Pol. II 542.

Mr. Barrington-Ward, the Deputy Editor of the London *Times*, who had dinner with me yesterday, told me the following in the course of a confidential conversation:

Since the days of Joe Chamberlain<sup>1</sup> at the end of the 90's there had been no time so favourable for collaboration between Britain and Germany as the present. British public opinion, with the exception of certain Conservatives on the extreme Right, had now fully understood that German equality of rights could no longer be altered, and was prepared to enter into discussions about the future with Germany on this basis. It was important that this favourable atmosphere should not be allowed to evaporate and possibly give way to the idea that the German Peace Plan of March 31<sup>2</sup> had, after all, not been intended quite as genuinely as it had sounded and that Germany might now perhaps have changed her mind in consequence of the new situation created by the Italian victory in Abyssinia. If Germany, however, were to act now, and if it should come to negotiations with Britain, then the prospects of success were good.

I told Mr. Barrington-Ward that all responsible personalities in Germany wanted to enter into discussions with Britain, and to do so on the basis of the Peace Plan of March 31. If things had gone as we wished, then it would have been possible to have sat down at the conference table in April and to have begun to discuss the reshaping of affairs in Europe. That this had not come about was not our fault but was attributable to the fact that the British Government had first staged the, in our view unnecessary, performance of the General Staff talks and had thereafter waited for five more weeks before they approached us with an extremely unhappily drafted questionnaire,<sup>3</sup> which for good measure had been published as well. It would have been much better if this interlude of the questionnaire had been completely avoided. Barrington-Ward thought that the British Government had had to proceed in this fashion. Moreover nothing much had been lost, since we only needed to reply to the questionnaire that the

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Chamberlain (1836-1914), British Liberal, later Liberal-Unionist M.P., Secretary of State for the Colonies 1895-1903, had been the principal advocate of an Anglo-German alliance in 1898.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 242.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313.

sincerity of our intentions would emerge at the negotiations themselves and the way would then be open to negotiations. In any case, however, the British Government were expecting an answer soon and, moreover, one in writing and it would be extremely regrettable and would have unfavourable repercussions on British public opinion if this answer were to be put off for any length of time or were perhaps to be omitted altogether.

Barrington-Ward also spoke in this sense to [Reichsbank] President Schacht the day before yesterday so Herr Schacht told me. The British Ambassador<sup>4</sup> himself, with whom I had lunch on Wednesday, also asked me emphatically when a reply to the questionnaire might be expected.

D[IECKHOFF]

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<sup>4</sup> Sir Eric Phipps.

## No. 360

1744/402761

### *The Chargé d'Affaires of the Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 84 of June 6

ROME, June 6, 1936—10:35 p.m.

Received June 7—2:30 a.m.

Pol. IV 417.

Suvich asked me to come and see him today and informed me that during Mussolini's conversation with Schuschnigg<sup>1</sup> the question, *inter alia*, of a German-Austrian *rapprochement* had been discussed. Schuschnigg had begun by describing the recognition of Austria's independence as the necessary basis and had then stated that he had in mind the following measures:

1. Admission into the Government of one or two personalities from the National camp.

2. Suppression of the press on either side [*gegenseitiger Presse*]<sup>2</sup> and other propaganda.

3. An amnesty which would also benefit the National Socialists (see your telegram No. 107 of June 3).<sup>3</sup>

Suvich added that he had not been commissioned in any way by Schuschnigg to inform the German Government of the above; Schuschnigg had, indeed, discussed the whole complex of questions directly with Papen and would do so again. He (Suvich) had merely wished to

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<sup>1</sup> Schuschnigg met Mussolini at the latter's house at Rocca della Caminata on June 4, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> The word "gegenseitiger" has been queried as doubtful in transmission; possibly the word "gegnerischer" (hostile) is intended.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 357, footnote 2.

inform us of the substance of the discussion between Mussolini and Schuschnigg. His information would probably contain nothing that was new to Berlin. Italy was sympathetically disposed towards the efforts for a *rapprochement*, but was aware of the delicate position in which a weak Austria found herself *vis-à-vis* a strong Germany. Suvich described Schuschnigg's plans as favourable for a *rapprochement*; in his view Schuschnigg could not do more at present; one would have to be content with progressing step by step.

Suvich further told me that the discussion, which had lasted for two hours, had covered a number of other questions of a political and economic nature which, however, did not affect Germany.

In reply to a question from me, Suvich said that Schuschnigg had stated that for reasons of domestic policy he would never renounce a restoration; nor was it at all necessary for him to do so, since the Habsburg question was in no way acute in Austria.

PLESSEN

### No. 361

7790/E562685-86

#### *The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Telegram

No. [131]<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, June [9]<sup>1</sup>, 1936—[6:00 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>  
SK 95 geh.

For the Chargé d'Affaires and the Naval Attaché.

Please convey the following German views on the British Memorandum of May 29:<sup>2</sup>

In reply to the British Note of May 29, 1936, the German Government have the honour to state the following:

The German Government are prepared to accede to the wish expressed by His Britannic Majesty's Government and to abstain from the building of the fourth and fifth "A"-class cruisers, provided that France and Russia lay down no more "A"-class cruisers either before the date of the entry into force of the Naval Treaty. The use to be made by Germany of the residual tonnage in respect of "A"-class cruisers will, in accordance with paragraph 5 of the Summary of Discussions,<sup>3</sup> be the subject of a later discussion.

Germany, in accordance with the provisions of the London Treaty of 1930,<sup>4</sup> will lay down two "B"-class cruisers before the end of the current year.

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the telegram control register.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 355, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> The words, "Summary of Discussions" are in English in the original; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 165.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 309, footnote 8.

The German Government express the hope that the remaining points contained in the German statement of views of May 4, 1936,<sup>5</sup> and also those contained in paragraph 2 of the Note of His Britannic Majesty's Government, will not now give rise to any further difficulties.

*Addition for the Naval Attaché*

Should you be asked any questions regarding the size of the proposed "B"-class cruisers, you should say that they will be of approximately the same size as the Southampton-class, or of the American "B"-class cruisers under construction, i.e., of a maximum tonnage of 10,000 tons.<sup>6</sup>

RIBBENTROP  
[DIECKHOFF]<sup>1</sup>

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 309.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "1. *Minute*. Secretary of Legation Dr. Kordt is informed of the agreement of the C. in C., Navy (June 9, 11:30). Draft submitted to Chief of SK and Chief of Staff. Chief of Staff considered submission to C.in.C not necessary. A I and V are informed. 2. To be filed. M[össel], June 9." In a letter of June 5 to Guse, (7790/E562677-80) reporting on a conversation with Ribbentrop, Wassner enclosed a copy of a summary, which he had compiled at Ribbentrop's request from the official reports of the past year, of what had been said about the 10,000 ton cruisers. He added that, in reply to a question by Ribbentrop, he had told him that, as things stood at present in Britain, for Germany to build a fourth "A"-class cruiser only would probably produce the same effect as would be produced by her building, as proposed, both a fourth and a fifth of these vessels.

No. 362

2898/565661-62

*Memorandum by the State Secretary and Head of the  
Presidential Chancellery<sup>1</sup>*

BERLIN, June 9, 1936.  
Pol. VIII 213.

The Führer and Chancellor received the Imperial Japanese Ambassador, Count Mushakoji, at 12:15 p.m. today, in his study.

Count Mushakoji expressed to the Führer and Chancellor in cordial terms the gratitude of His Majesty the Emperor for the picture of the Emperor Saga (a fourteenth-century Japanese work of art) which the Führer recently presented to the Imperial House. The gift, he said, had given much pleasure and had been greatly appreciated by the Emperor.

The Ambassador then stated that during his stay in Japan, which had lasted nearly nine months, he had been able to observe how much understanding and sympathy were felt for the new Germany. The Japanese form of Government had changed inwardly in that—as in

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was sent by Meissner, the Head of the Presidential Chancellery, to the Foreign Ministry under a covering letter of even date (2898/565660).



Germany—it had now become authoritarian. Japan regarded Bolshevism and the Communist idea as her great enemies; holding this view, she looked with great respect on Germany, who, as Russia's western neighbour, had overcome this danger. Japan, as a spiritually related country, was in the fullest sympathy with Germany and her Führer and desired the closest cooperation with Germany.

The Führer and Chancellor replied that he was happy to take note of this and was prepared for this cooperation. He had always considered Europe's only salvation to lie in an uncompromising struggle against Communism. If Communism were not overthrown and if the Communist idea were to establish itself throughout Europe, Europe would suffer a collapse such as the world of antiquity had done 1800 years ago. In Britain too—as he gathered from a report by Herr von Ribbentrop who had just returned from that country—this danger was beginning to be increasingly understood, and France would have unpleasant experiences yet, after the formation of her new Government and in her inclination towards Soviet Russia. One could not, he said, reject Communism as an ideology and at the same time maintain friendly relations with Soviet Russia, because in so doing one transplanted the poison of the Bolshevik idea into one's own country.

The Japanese Ambassador heartily agreed with this and expressed the hope that a common attitude on the part of Japan and Germany would be of value.

Dr. MEISSNER

## No. 363

7023/E522314-20

*Ambassador Trautmann to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, June 10, 1936.

DEAR HERR DIECKHOFF: I was received by the Führer yesterday and I then went and saw Herr von Ribbentrop. I had originally intended to give the Führer my views on Far Eastern policy in written form, but I was not able to do so. As my conversation with Herr von Ribbentrop was very short and no opportunity presented itself for a more detailed discussion, I thereupon gave him my brief Memorandum. I enclose a carbon copy of it.

I have not discussed in it the one question of whether it would be possible for a German-Japanese policy to *prevent* an understanding with Russia.<sup>2</sup> This would probably depend on the price which Russia

<sup>1</sup> The letter here printed is in Trautmann's handwriting.

<sup>2</sup> At this time Soviet-Japanese conversations were in progress in Moscow on the regulation of boundary questions between Manchukuo and the USSR. See *International Military Tribunal for the Far East, Proceedings*, pp. 35419-35421, evidence of Kameyama.

would be willing to pay for an understanding. Nor have I touched on the question of whether, even if we had an understanding, Japan, if her interests were to change at any given moment, would come up to our expectations in her later actions too. (Compare Japan's passive behaviour during the World War after she had achieved her aims—Kiaochow.) All this can be seen better from Japan than from China.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler,

Yours,

TRAUTMANN

[Enclosure]

#### GERMANY AND CHINA

Present relations between Germany and China can be described as good. There are no points of political friction between the two countries. There is much sympathy in China for the New Germany.

Since Marshal Chiang Kai-shek is employing about sixty military advisers from Germany, who are doing admirable work under General von Falkenhausen, we also enjoy the confidence of the most authoritative quarter in the country.

Politically, there is only one element of danger for us in China: our relations with Japan and Manchukuo. As long as the present antagonism between China and Japan continues to exist, any closer connection between any country and Japan and Manchukuo creates the feeling in China that this connection is directed against her. For this reason China has jealously followed all reports about Manchukuo being recognized by Germany or about an alliance between Japan and Germany. If we were to conclude such treaties, we would have to be prepared for great setbacks in China. First of all we would lose the sympathy of the Chinese people, which is the foundation of our activity in China; in addition we would destroy the prerequisites for the work of our military advisers and inflict serious damage on our trade with China, which in the last resort is based on the confidence which we enjoy among the Chinese people.

Taking the Far East as a whole, it is therefore necessary for us to pursue a policy which *cultivates uniformly* friendship with both countries, China and Japan, and to make no choice in favour of either country. Several times before the war Germany made the mistake of intervening in political questions in the Far East. This proved wrong. Eastern Asia is too far away from us for us to be able to pursue any policy there which involves risks for ourselves. Nor have we the means of power (a fleet) to assert our views if the need should arise. From a policy of restraint and friendship for the peoples of the Far East, on the other hand, we can only benefit. For we are concerned here with great areas in which everything has yet to be developed, and with the opportunity of assisting in this development.

Our interests in China demand that China should *not* be completely swallowed by Japan. Experience has taught that where Japan conquers a market the other Powers are squeezed out of it. Our interests in this respect run *parallel to those of the British*. Britain, too, wishes to maintain good relations with Japan; but, on the other hand, she is much concerned to see that Japan does not become too powerful in the Pacific (because of Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia) and that China does not fall completely under the Japanese sway. Britain is not at present in a position to keep Japan in check. She is awaiting the future, which, in the Far East, has so often developed differently from what Japan has expected.

Nevertheless, since British policy can show more activity in the Far East in favour of China than can ours, we can let the British do our work for us without running any risk ourselves.

A German understanding with Japan would, on the other hand, be embarrassing for British policy in the Far East. It is in Britain's interests that Japan should not become too strong and also that the Russian factor should not be completely eliminated in the Far East. The nearer we draw to Japan, politically, the greater will be Russia's chance to engage Britain's interest on Russia's behalf. By such a policy we should be working for a Russo-British *rapprochement* without, in this way, having gained Japan as an active factor in *European* politics. Japan has no interests in Europe and will run no risks there. We shall thus have gained nothing for our policy in Europe if we come to an understanding with Japan.

Russo-Japanese policy is at present unpredictable. It is not impossible that in Japan the military men will be overborne by that political trend which seeks as its final objective an understanding with Russia to reduce Russian armaments in the Far East, once the frontier questions between Manchukuo and Russia, the fisheries question, etc., have been settled. Now that Stalin has stated that a Japanese advance into Outer Mongolia would constitute a *casus belli*,<sup>3</sup> Outer Mongolia can only be gained by attack.

The military situation in Manchuria, however, is such that a Japanese military enterprise against Siberia and Outer Mongolia would involve great risk for Japan. The Russian Air Force, moreover, is very strong. Besides, Japan would hardly have any objective to gain in a war against Russia, other than Mongolia; she could not digest the Russian coastal province. The Japanese will therefore be pondering whether they cannot attain a reasonable settlement of the frontiers and Russian disarmament without war—by intimidation and pressure.

If, nevertheless, a war were to break out between Russia and Japan

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<sup>3</sup> In the course of an interview given on Mar. 6, 1936, to Mr. Roy Howard, Chairman of the Scripps-Howard newspaper group (see the *Journal des Nations* of Mar. 8, 1936).



as the result of the Japanese military taking the law into their own hands, we would have the necessary *détente* in Europe even without an alliance with Japan. It is thus quite unnecessary for us to run the risk of annoying China.

If a conflict were to take place in Europe, it seems to me doubtful whether our military situation would be *appreciably* eased even by an understanding with Japan. With or without a Japanese-German understanding a Russian army will remain in the Far East at about its present strength (150,000–200,000 men) in order to defend Siberia. The Russian Far Eastern Army has developed into an almost independent fighting force and is, moreover, sufficient for defensive purposes. Russia will not, however, go beyond the defence of Siberia and Mongolia. Conversely, in the event of a European conflict, Japan will hardly take many risks *vis-à-vis* Russia since her Chinese adversary would immediately profit from this.

From every point of view, therefore, we reach the conclusion that Germany ought *not* to pursue a one-sided policy in the Far East.

Economically, Germany has fully stood her ground in *China* despite the marked depression that set in with the rise in the price of silver. Admittedly, we have not yet regained the *pre-war* figures for exchange of goods, but we rank *among the leading Powers* as regards imports. There is hope that German-Chinese trade will increase in the future.

China faces great tasks. The construction of railways will have to be developed, and industry is only in its initial stages. We have prospects of participating here, and we must avail ourselves of these prospects. We shall have to accept a certain risk in respect of credits, but this risk should be kept within bounds since past events have shown that China is not in a position to pay punctually the interest on and to amortize a heavy load of debt. In order to make up the deficit in her balance of trade, she has always had to export precious metals and raise loans or secure foreign investments. Since the country has to spend 50 to 60 per cent of its small revenue for military purposes, and since the expenditure on armaments will increase even further in the next ten years, there is not much likelihood that these conditions will suddenly improve.

In view of our economic activities in China the question must naturally be raised as to what chances the present Chinese Government have of holding their ground in the long run. This question can only be answered approximately at a time of extreme tension in foreign affairs between China and Japan, which may possibly lead to serious clashes.

The answer to it depends partly on the question of when China will have attained the decisive point [*Risikomoment*] at which it will no longer be possible for Japan to overrun the country without further ado but when a military operation against China will actually become



a risk for the aggressor. The battles at Shanghai two years ago have shown that the modern Chinese soldier can fight. The training of a small modern army, equipped with every up-to-date weapon, is being pressed forward. The Chinese themselves believe that in about six months time their rearmament will already be so far advanced that the danger point for Japan will arise. This estimate is too optimistic. General von Seeckt thinks that about three to four years will be necessary. The estimate shows, however, what is being done at present and what the Chinese themselves *want*.

Once this danger point is passed, we can expect, with more assurance than hitherto, that Chiang Kai-shek's Government will be *consolidated*. Internal conditions still deteriorate only under the impact of external policy, which at this very moment is in a position almost devoid of prospects.

### No. 364

3653/E033092-94

#### *The Head of the European Section of the Political Department to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, June 11, 1936—5:00 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Pol. IV 555.

No. 59

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Dr. Altenburg.

The discussion<sup>1</sup> with a view to settling Sudeten German problems led to the following results:

1) Kaspar [*sic*]<sup>2</sup> will be recalled to the Executive and installed in his sphere of activities. This under two conditions:

a) That Kaspar declares that, after reviewing the whole problem recently, he now sees matters in a different light and thinks that grounds for his resignation no longer exist.

<sup>1</sup> The telegram here printed is based in part on a protocol (2381/498927-28) of points agreed at a meeting held to settle Sudeten German matters on June 9, in Berlin, at the house of Dr. Altenburg, and attended by him, Professor Wehofsich of the Staff of the Führer's Deputy, and the Sudeten Germans Krebs, Metzner, Frank, Sander and Zippe-lius. A copy of this protocol was sent to Altenburg under cover of a letter, headed Berlin, June 9, and signed by Adolf Metzner (9545/E672520), which stated that the protocol had been drawn up by Zeppelius; a second letter from Metzner of even date (9545/E672519) stated that the name of Krebs had been accidentally omitted from the list of participants. The telegram here printed is also partly based on a letter from Krebs to Metzner, headed Berlin, June 9 (2381/498929-30), commenting on the protocol cited above. See also documents Nos. 353 and 372 with footnotes thereto. No further information on the background to this dispute has been found in the Foreign Ministry files.

<sup>2</sup> Rudolf Kasper resigned his functions of member of the Sudeten German Party Executive and Head of the Sudeten German Party Central Office for Workers' and Employees' Affairs on May 29; see document No. 372, enclosure 2.

b) Henlein thereupon requests Kaspar to withdraw his resignation and continue to collaborate.

2) The Kreissl<sup>3</sup> affair will be reviewed at once. It will be stated that his dismissal was not due to disloyalty. Thereupon he will be completely reinstated.

3) Attempts will be made to find a solution for Dr. Meckl, Liebl and Brehme,<sup>4</sup> (in which connection Frank<sup>5</sup> states that Liebl and Brehme appear prepared to cooperate).

4) Brand<sup>6</sup> is to remain a member of the Executive but for reasons which lie entirely with him it is being considered whether to entrust him with a political task in Switzerland, Britain or elsewhere for a while. If Brand asks for leave, this will be granted.

Kaspar and his circle are also to do everything possible themselves to dispel the mistrust of Brand.

5) Haider<sup>7</sup> is to be called to Berlin and informed by Regierungsrat Krebs<sup>8</sup> that Henlein enjoys the confidence of the Reich and that Haider is being offered the opportunity to perform useful political service abroad for the Sudeten-German community.

6) Regierungsrat Krebs agrees to use his influence to ensure that there is an end to personal intrigues in the SdP in future and will inform Party members as they arrive that Henlein personally and as Party leader enjoys the complete confidence of Government authorities here and that the ruling as set forth above represents the opinion and desires of the competent Party offices.

At the preliminary discussions in which Regierungsrat Krebs took part, it was stated on behalf of the competent Party offices that Konrad Henlein enjoyed, now and for the future, their unreserved confidence, but that the disciplinary measures taken against old Party comrades had occasioned distress and it was much hoped that the conflict which had arisen would soon be resolved.

RENTHE-FINK

<sup>3</sup> It emerges from Kasper's unsigned account of recent events, cited in document No. 372, footnote 7, that Dr. Kreissl was associated with him in opposition to Brand.

<sup>4</sup> The names of Dr. Meckl, Deputy Liebl and Engineer Brehme occur in the Krebs letter of June 9 (cited in footnote 1 above) which stated that their cases must also be reconsidered.

<sup>5</sup> Karl Hermann Frank, elected a Deputy of the Sudeten German Party to the Czechoslovak Parliament in May 1935; see also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 320.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. Walter Brand; see also documents No. 353, footnote 1, and No. 372.

<sup>7</sup> Rudolf Haider, one of the defendants in the *Volkssport* trial (for which see also vol. i of this Series, documents Nos. 326 and 429); was associated with Kasper in opposition to Brand.

<sup>8</sup> Hans Krebs, a former Deputy in the Czechoslovak Parliament and Landesleiter of the DNSAP in Bohemia. In October 1933 he left Czechoslovakia for Germany, where he worked in the German Ministry of the Interior on press questions, and became a member of the Reichstag. See also this Series, vol. i, document No. 483, and vol. iii, document No. 523.

[EDITORS' NOTE: During the preparatory stages of the reorganization of the Foreign Ministry which came into effect in May 1936 (for details of which see Appendix I), steps were taken to centralize in Department VI (which became the Cultural Policy Department) the handling of work connected with Volksdeutsche. In a memorandum of March 1936, filed after the reorganization as Kult. A 53 (g.Rs.) (8775/E611423-30), Twardowski reviewed the problems arising under the existing distribution of the work amongst various departments and emphasized that, in view of the creation of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle (see below), it would in future be essential for the Foreign Ministry to improve its internal coordination and to be uniformly represented in the new agency. To this memorandum is annexed the unsigned draft of an internal directive (8775/E611434-35), also dated March 1936, of which the opening paragraph reads: "The so-called 'Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle' has been created in order to give unified direction to the Reich's policy concerning Volksdeutsche. All the Reich and Party authorities which deal with political questions concerning Volksdeutsche have been united in this organization. The Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle will deal with all relevant spheres of national [*völkischen*] life and will issue directives. Because of the confidential nature of the subjects to be dealt with, the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle will not appear in public; for the same reason the number of persons who are to be called upon to take part in the conferences of the Mittelstelle will be limited. At the wish of the Head of the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle the point of view of the Foreign Ministry will be represented in the organization by the Head of Department VI, or by his deputy.

"In order to ensure that the Foreign Ministry is uniformly represented with the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and with the Party and Reich offices concerned with volksdeutsch questions, the following is decreed:

"1) In respect of volksdeutsch questions dealings with the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and the representation of the Foreign Ministry interests, both in the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle and in the organizations associated with it, are to be exclusively the province of Department VI. If need should arise Department VI will call in the political department concerned. The Ländergruppen are required in principle to conduct all negotiations with the Volksdeutsche Mittelstelle on volksdeutsch matters only through Department VI or in conjunction with Department VI, and to channel the appropriate correspondence through Department VI.

"2) Measures must be taken to ensure that Department VI is kept currently informed of all occurrences and all important discussions in volksdeutsch questions with the Reich departments and the Party offices and that Department VI participates in any decisions.

"3) In the event of grants of money for volksdeutsch purposes being



sponsored by other departments, Department VI is to be brought in for counter signature."

No copy of any final text, the issue of which would have been within the competence of the Personnel Department, has been found. The head of the Mittelstelle was evidently Ministerialrat von Kursell, whose office had taken the place of the Volksdeutsch Council in 1935 (see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 549, footnote 4).]

## No. 365

3023/598507-16

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Minister of Economics*

TOP SECRET

BERLIN, June 11, 1936.

Kult.<sup>1</sup> A 64 (g.Rs.).

The enclosed application by the Deutsche Stiftung for a monthly foreign exchange allowance to the value of 316,400 RM, together with a detailed statement in its support, which have been submitted to us, are herewith forwarded to you with our urgent recommendation.

By order:  
TWARDOWSKI

[Enclosure 1]

DEUTSCHE STIFTUNG

BERLIN, June 10, 1936.

TOP SECRET

1913

To the Reich Minister of Economics.

Enclosed we are submitting a memorandum on the objectives and means employed in the work undertaken in respect of German communities in the ceded territories. This work is carried out by German organizations in the territories concerned. It is the duty of the Deutsche Stiftung to supervise this work and to provide the necessary means, when these cannot be raised in the territories themselves.

If the strictest economy is practised and the utmost use is made of the financial resources of the German communities in the ceded territories, the Deutsche Stiftung needs a monthly amount in foreign exchange equivalent to 316,400 RM to carry out its tasks in national and ethnic [*volkspolitisch*] policy.

For months now the supply of foreign exchange for our purposes has stopped completely. A complete collapse of the work for the German communities abroad could only be avoided by the organizations' obtaining large bank credits. A consequence of this is that

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 610.



the German banks have been seriously crippled in their own aims namely to aid the German economy in the ceded territories, with the result that damage to the economy is already noticeable. Further recourse to the banks is, in any case quite out of the question, so that a final breakdown of the care of German communities abroad must immediately follow unless at the eleventh hour help arrives from Germany again and the necessary foreign exchange is supplied. In order to prevent this imminent catastrophe we request that an amount to the value of 316,400 RM per month for current expenditure, and foreign exchange as required for the building of schools, be made available.

KRAHMER-MÖLLENBERG

[Enclosure 2]

The political importance of the German communities in the ceded territories has been clearly recognized both by Germany and by every one of the Successor States [*Erwerberstaat*]. The presence of a strong German community may be likened to a political mortgage on these territories. It is the constant fear of the ruling races [*Staatsvolk*] of the foreign States concerned that the German Reich, having once become strong again, might foreclose this mortgage. The intention to destroy the German element therefore unambiguously obtains in all of the Successor States. If they succeed in this purpose then they will have removed a pressing political danger and confirmed the thesis, propounded by all the Successor States, namely, that the German communities in these territories are not indigenous but are the result of a politically calculated settlement policy on the part of Prussia.

The dangers, which such a development would entail for an active Eastern policy by the German Reich in future, are obvious. In the event of opportunities arising at some later date tangible proof of the historical German claims would be lacking.

Apart from this consideration there is also the fact that any influx of Germans into the already overpopulated Reich would entail fresh difficulties in the spheres of housing and food.

The preservation of the Germans and of German-owned property in the ceded territories is, therefore, one of the foremost requirements of our policy.

If it is desired to take this into account, then the German community, which, as it is, has been greatly weakened by the unchecked emigration psychosis of the years 1920-1923, must be preserved from any further losses due to migration and German culture must be ensured to those Germans still persevering there.

Since 1923 emigration has for the most part been stopped by most stringent measures. It was possible to forbid emigration without causing special hardship to the German who had his roots, in the form of

property, beyond the borders of the Reich, because his economic existence was for the most part secured for him by the yield from his land or his workshop. The situation was and is very much more difficult for those in receipt of war pensions, civil pensions, or similar sources of income, in so far as these Germans are not agricultural folk attached to the soil. It is true that the Successor States usually make these recipients some allowances, but the rate of payment is lower than that of the allowances paid in the Reich—to which the recipients would be entitled should they return. This lowering of the standard of living is the reason for a very marked tendency to emigrate. In order to be able to counteract this, a system of additional payments has been introduced to supplement the payments made by the Successor States, as a result of which the recipients enjoy a total payment of 80–90 per cent of the allowances paid in Germany. The rate was fixed at 80–90 per cent in view of the greater purchasing power of money in most of the Successor States.

Once these conditions had been created it was possible for the German Consulates to turn down applications to emigrate [to Germany] which they received from these sections of the German community. This practice, however, is tenable only for as long as such conditions exist.

Increasing foreign exchange difficulties had already led, some time ago, in respect of all payments of maintenance allowances of any sort where larger amounts are involved, or if the recipient has an income from possessions or employment in Poland, to part of the payments being made in RM into a special Reich German account. This ruling is being put into practice with increasing severity and results in unavoidable hardships. Whether the Polish Foreign Exchange Decree of April 26, 1936,<sup>2</sup> will affect the maintenance of this ruling cannot yet be foreseen, since so far only a few of the Polish Government's regulations for implementing this decree have been published.

But if the amounts required in foreign exchange, which have been whittled down to a minimum, are not guaranteed, then none of our previous practice in this question of emigration can be maintained. War disabled, widows and orphans, pensioners, salaried employees would be abandoned to utter destitution and misery, were the payments effected from Germany to be discontinued.

Neither the political interests nor the moral responsibility of the Reich nor Germany's good name can in our opinion permit such a development. The only alternative would be to allow emigration with all its above-mentioned dangerous effects. Here another, financial, repercussion has also to be considered. If the beneficiaries of these payments

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<sup>2</sup> Under this Decree currency restrictions to conserve Poland's foreign exchange were being introduced.

were to emigrate, the payments made to them by the Successor States would of course cease. For Poland alone, where it is possible to make a fairly accurate estimate, these payments amount to a total of 53,000 RM monthly.

If the German in the ceded territories is to be kept for the German community, there is an urgent need to maintain cultural institutions for him. From the very first day of their taking over the Successor States have all fought against all institutions serving German culture, such as schools, churches, libraries etc. Over and above this they have undermined the economic life of the German wherever possible.

The most important objectives in their campaign are the schools, and, consequently, German youth. In Poland, Lithuania, Belgium and Czechoslovakia it is the overt aim of the ruling race [*Staatsvolk*] to render German youth ripe for assimilation. In Denmark this aim is being pursued by other methods, but with no less tenacity of purpose. The most important basis for assimilation is the foreign [*fremdvölkisch*] school. A German child, who is obliged to attend such a school, may perhaps hold his ground to some extent in this generation, provided German is the language spoken by his parents at home, but it is now rarely the case that home influence alone ensures a complete command of the German mother tongue. The children of this generation already grow up in a home where the language in everyday use is strongly coloured by foreign expressions. The ability of this rising generation to resist assimilation is thus broken. If one considers in addition the assimilating influence of military service and the danger of mixed marriages, then it becomes clear that the important and valuable substance of the national community [*Volkstum*] is being jeopardized. Moreover, this assimilation brings with it the special disadvantage that this loss of substance for our people results at the same time in an enrichment of the foreign community [*Volkstum*] by the introduction into their race of high-grade German blood.

Consequently it must be the mother nation's task to counteract this process. The most important means to this end is the German private school. But as this can never accommodate more than a proportion of the German youth it must be supplemented by cultural institutions designed above all to aid those young Germans who attend the State schools. In this connection it must be borne in mind that even in State schools where lessons are in German, the approach and way of thinking are very often not German. The pupils and ex-pupils of these schools must therefore be reached by itinerant teachers, by lending libraries, and by youth organizations.

But the difficulties that are put in the way of German youth by the Successor States, however, even go so far as to exclude this youth to a very large extent from any opportunity of economic advancement. Germans are not accepted as apprentices; German master



craftsmen and German firms are obliged to employ apprentices belonging to the ruling race. One need only refer to Eastern Upper Silesia, where these methods have been developed to the highest degree of perfection. There the Poles have had their way by completely depriving German boys of any possibility of economic advancement.

It is therefore all the more important to unite our young fellow Germans in German professional organizations, to give them opportunities for training and to advance and instruct them to the utmost extent to which this is permitted by the laws of the Successor States.

This purpose is served by the institutions concerned with the furtherance of general culture, youth work and vocational guidance and by the organizations which have been developed in all the ceded territories.

Our meagre financial resources force us to cut down the work to a bare minimum. But if this bare minimum is not guaranteed then there remains for the German community only emigration or assimilation.

In detailed discussions we have endeavoured to define the minimum requirements and have come to the following conclusions; the figures in the table represent monthly amounts:<sup>3</sup>

No amounts for the building of schools have been included in this table, as it is not possible at present to estimate the sum required for this purpose. The extent of the work that can be undertaken depends of necessity upon the impositions of the Polish authorities. The Germans have no way at all of influencing the extent of these impositions. For the work to be carried out by the autumn of this year the requirement is estimated at the round figure of one million Reichsmark, which must be made available in foreign exchange (Złoty).<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> This table is printed on the following page.

<sup>4</sup> In circular W spec. 1032 of June 12, 1936 (3108/629199-202) the Legations in Czechoslovakia, Rumania, Yugoslavia, Latvia and Estonia were confidentially instructed that, whilst economic and spiritual dependence of the German minorities abroad on their motherland were fully appreciated it was at present impossible, owing to Germany's financial situation and shortage of foreign exchange, to grant any assistance except in countries where favourable conditions existed for transfer without using such exchange. The Legations were requested, while assuring the leaders of the German community of Germany's interest, goodwill and sympathy, to point out that self-help was the only way out for some time to come. It was, moreover, absolutely essential for the economic institutions of the German minorities abroad to protect themselves by carefully camouflaging all connections with political organizations. The Legations were requested confidentially to inform the relevant Consulates of these instructions, avoiding, if possible, communication in writing. Further material on this subject has been filmed on Serial 2508. For other documents on the financing of German minorities in the ceded territories see also vol. VII of Series D, Appendix III, Section (F).



Territory	General work for German communities abroad (Culture, Education, Vocational training, Youth work, etc.)	School[s]	Pensioners	Total
	(a) in RM (b) in foreign exchange	(a) in RM (b) in foreign exchange	(a) in RM (b) in foreign exchange	(a) in RM (b) in foreign exchange
1	2	3	4	5
Posen and West Prussia	(a) 8,300	(a) 4,200	(a) 60,000	(a) 72,500
	(b) 25,000	(b) 69,100	(b) 43,300	(b) 137,400
Total	33,300	73,300	103,300	209,900
Danzig	(a) —	(a) —	(a) —	(a) —
	(b) 20,000	(b) —	(b) —	(b) 20,000
Total	20,000			20,000
Upper Silesia	(a) 8,300	(a) 8,300	(a) 23,300	(a) 39,900
	(b) 33,300	(b) 76,700	(b) 11,700	(b) 121,700
Total	41,600	85,000	35,000	161,600
Hutschin [ <i>sic</i> ] <sup>5</sup>	(a) —	(a) —	(a) —	(a) —
	(b) —	(b) 5,000	(b) —	(b) 5,000
Total	—	5,000	—	5,000
North Schleswig	(a) 1,200	(a) 4,200	(a) 1,000	(a) 6,400
	(b) 4,600	(b) 15,000	(b) 2,000	(b) 21,600
Total	5,800	19,200	3,000	28,000
Memel	(a) —	(a) 1,700	(a) 1,000	(a) 2,700
	(b) 300	(b) 4,200	(b) 2,000	(b) 6,500
Total	300	5,900	3,000	9,200
Other and unforeseen requirements	(a) 800	(a) —	(a) —	(a) 800
	(b) 4,200	(b) —	(b) —	(b) 4,200
Total	5,000	—	—	5,000
TOTAL	(a) 18,600	(a) 18,400	(a) 85,300	(a) 122,300
	(b) 87,400	(b) 170,000	(b) 59,000	(b) 316,400
	106,000	188,400	144,300	438,700

<sup>5</sup> The reference would appear to be to the Hultschin [Hlučín] territory in Czechoslovakia.

## No. 366

7790/E562688

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 544

LONDON, June 11, 1936.

SK 133.

Subject: Communication of the German Note concerning "A"-class  
cruisers.

Prince Bismarck, the German Chargé d'Affaires, accompanied by me, called on Mr. Craigie today and communicated to him the German Government's Note of June 9<sup>1</sup> regarding our non-construction of "A"-class cruisers etc.

Mr. Craigie expressed great satisfaction at this decision and described it as "a most satisfactory solution",<sup>2</sup> which would undoubtedly be particularly appreciated by the members of the Cabinet, and which confirmed anew the treaty position between us and would make the position *vis-à-vis* other countries easier. He emphasized that, in the event of other countries building "A"-class cruisers, we should, of course, have the same right, as was set down in our Note.

He did not enlarge on the subject of the two "B"-class cruisers, merely saying that he presumed we would furnish the customary information with regard to details, which I confirmed.

The remaining points in our Memorandum<sup>3</sup> would, he hoped, prove capable of satisfactory solution in the near future.

WASSNER<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A marginal note identifies this with document No. 361.

<sup>2</sup> The words in quotation marks are in English in the original.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., of May 4. See document No. 309.

<sup>4</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "The Counsellor of Embassy is informed."

## No. 367

6982/E521676-77

*Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 12, 1936.

The South African Minister<sup>1</sup> called here yesterday and informed me in strict confidence that Minister Pirow,<sup>2</sup> who is at present in London, had telephoned and told him that the situation as it appeared from London made it urgently desirable that Anglo-German conversations should take place as soon as possible. At the present moment the guiding

<sup>1</sup> S. F. N. Gie.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 333.

principles of a new British foreign policy were being laid down, and it was thus urgently desirable that the German-British situation should be clarified in good time. The South African Government, too, were particularly interested in such clarification, and especially Pirow himself. He asked whether it would not be possible for the German Government to invite Lord Halifax and Mr. Pirow to come to Germany as soon as possible to discuss here the situation both with the Führer and Chancellor and with the Foreign Minister. Mr. Pirow realized that such a step would attract a great deal of attention; one would therefore have to see whether some plausible reason could not be found for the two statesmen's visit to Germany.

I told Mr. Gie that it was true that at an earlier stage the British had once said that a member of the British Cabinet might come to Berlin at a suitable moment in order to conduct conversations here, and that Halifax's name had been mentioned by the British in this connection. Nor had we any objection in principle to this, but so far no suitable moment for such a conversation had arisen. As regards a possible visit to Germany by Mr. Pirow, we had very cordially welcomed the idea when it was suggested to us some weeks ago via our Minister in Pretoria. But we had then heard no more about the journey. There had, as far as I knew, never been any mention before of a joint visit by Lord Halifax and Mr. Pirow; and in particular we had heard nothing so far of such a plan from the British. I was therefore unable to comment in any way on this matter, but I would submit the suggestion to the Foreign Minister on his return to Berlin. One thing, however, I was sure of, if such a trip materialized, no pretext could be used for it (Kiel Week or something of the sort), since the world would not believe it anyway; in such an event a straightforward statement would surely have to be made that the British statesmen were coming to Berlin in order to hold discussions.

I had assumed that the above conversation had settled the matter, which I rather attributed to a certain officiousness on the part of Mr. Pirow and perhaps of Mr. Gie, but today, to my surprise, Mr. Gie telephoned me again and most urgently requested me to receive him once more. He told me that Mr. Pirow had again urged upon him from London how important it was that German-British conversations should take place; every hour, indeed, might decide future developments. Could not the decision about the plan for a visit be taken this very day?<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> In a private letter to Dieckhoff, dated June 12, 1936 (6982/E521678-79), Fritz Brehmer, the Consul General of the Union of South Africa in Hamburg, wrote that he had just received a personal handwritten letter from Minister Pirow in London, saying: "I [Pirow], would only come to Germany if the British Foreign Minister decided to come as well," and "I do not like the look of the international situation at all, yet I believe that one hour's straight-forward conversation could do more for an Anglo-German *rapprochement* than months of correspondence."

My attitude to Mr. Gie was entirely reserved. I let him see that this haste surprised me considerably and that, although I in no way doubted Mr. Pirow's sincerity and good intentions, I did not, however, see what considerations justified such precipitous action. The conversation ended with my repeating that I would put the matter to the Foreign Minister on his return.<sup>4</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>4</sup> The document here printed is marked: "Has been submitted to the Foreign Minister" and is initialled by Neurath. In a minute of June 13 (6982/E521683) Dieckhoff noted: "After reporting to the Foreign Minister, I informed the South African Minister by telephone that the matter would be submitted to the Führer and Chancellor on his next visit to Berlin and, moreover, that we had as yet heard nothing from the British about the proposed visit."

## No. 368

1946/435661-63

### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division II*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 12, 1936.

Pol. VII 339a.

When he received Ambassador von Hassell, the Führer and Chancellor returned to the idea of recognizing the annexation of Abyssinia and at the same time again said that we might possibly not only effect such recognition *de facto* but might also include it in a broader framework and consider recognition of the State of Manchukuo as well. With regard to the question of what we might demand from Italy in return for such recognition, the Führer and Chancellor said that concessions from Mussolini in the Austrian matter would be excluded, but that there might be a question of Italy's recognizing the situation created by our action of March 7 in the formerly demilitarized zone, which would mean that Italy would then no longer be able to return to the so-called Stresa front. These ideas were not gone into any further during the conversation with Herr von Hassell.

Should this matter be further pursued, the following points might be worth considering.

(1) Any action in German foreign policy in the question of recognizing the *faits accomplis* of Italy and Japan, involves the danger of its being interpreted by the other Powers as reducing Germany, who can so far not be accused of any breach of peace, to the level of Italy and Japan; so that henceforth we too would bear the odium of being a breaker of the peace.

(2) In view of the still very undecided attitude of British public opinion, any German action of the kind in question could easily lead to a fateful setback in the attitude of British foreign policy to Germany; especially since there is the danger that a German move of this kind



would be interpreted by public opinion as an anti-British attitude. Even if Germany's anticipation of the recognition of annexation were to prove tactically convenient for Britain, this would still not prevent Germany from being represented as a scapegoat for having sabotaged any united attitude by the Great Powers.

(3) A premature German decision in the recognition question might well lose us the advantage that we have so far derived from our neutral attitude in the Abyssinian conflict, namely of keeping a free hand *vis-à-vis* Italy, Britain and the League of Nations. Italy, who has Abyssinia in her grasp anyway, might now no longer appreciate it so highly were we to relinquish our policy of wait and see, while, where the League of Nations Powers are concerned, it might create the impression that we were abandoning the idea of a German return to Geneva, and thus also our peace plan generally.

(4) To link the recognition of Abyssinia's annexation with that of Manchukuo would hardly mitigate the general effect of our action, but might have the twofold disadvantage, firstly, of ruining our position in China and, secondly, of laying us open to the suspicion of intending to set up a German-Italian-Japanese bloc.

(5) The recognition of our action of March 7 is hardly of great practical significance any longer since, apart from France, no Power is seriously prepared itself to draw any further conclusions beyond its own opposition to this action. Scarcely anywhere is there any inclination to put up with fresh crises in order at this stage to help France to achieve success in forcing through her views. The greatest danger point in this respect lies in the coming into force of the British Letter of Guarantee to France.<sup>1</sup> This does not, however, depend on Italy's accession to the promised Guarantee, so that the danger of Britain's slipping into the anti-German camp which France is promoting cannot be averted by agreements with Mussolini.<sup>2</sup>

RINTELEN

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Ang[abe] under Pol. VII 349 a"; see document No. 370.

## No. 369

1744/402773-75

*The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria*

Cipher Telegram

BERLIN, June 13, 1936—5:55 p.m.

No. 58

[zu] Pol. IV 589.<sup>1</sup>For the Minister personally.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your report A 3154 of June 11.<sup>1</sup>

The Federal Chancellor's proposal to pursue the discussion of plans for reconciliation not with members of the National Opposition but with you direct, as the Führer's representative, represents a departure from our previous course, which was to try to treat the pacification in Austria as a matter of domestic politics, the outcome of which required the Führer's approval only with regard to its repercussions on relations between the Reich and Austria. Schuschnigg's proposal, seeing that he is trying to conduct negotiations without the National Opposition, makes a double motive seem possible:

(1) To sow distrust between the Reich and the Führer and the Movement in Austria.

(2) In the case of a premeditated breakdown in the discussions, to accuse us of interfering in internal Austrian affairs.

In view of the way Schuschnigg's mind works, the idea cannot be completely disregarded that direct negotiations with you are to be conducted for the sole purpose of making it appear to international public opinion that the internal pacification of Austria has foundered on opposition from the Reich and then to represent a Restoration as a necessary last resort to overcome the present difficulties.

I therefore recommend that at the forthcoming discussions you should as far as possible adhere to the attitude already adopted that no representative of the National Opposition would assume the office of an "ice-breaker" in Schuschnigg's Government who had not himself clearly come to understand the Head of Government's course and objective. You should say that we were trying to avoid any appearance of interference in internal Austrian affairs. The National Opposition in Austria was an independent political factor. It would therefore be difficult and troublesome for you and for the Reich were you to depart from the previous course of mediation and advice and

<sup>1</sup> In this despatch (1744/402765-67) Papen reported on a conversation of June 10 with Schuschnigg about further procedure over the discussions on the German-Austrian *rapprochement*.

<sup>2</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "[This] Draft follows a conversation with Herr von Renthe-Fink."

to appear before the Federal Chancellor officially as a negotiator for the demands of the National Opposition. Only the path of negotiations between the Government and representatives of the National Opposition promised to lead to a successful solution in our view. In this you were at all times prepared to cooperate as an adviser and mediator.

NEURATH

## No. 370

1946/435665-67

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, June 13, 1936.

Pol. VII 349a.<sup>1</sup>

In my opinion, the preliminary question must first be clarified as to whether the Italians really attach such great importance to Germany's recognition of the annexation of Abyssinia at the present moment, a point which I do not regard as being entirely certain.<sup>2</sup> It is not impossible that the Italians believe that such recognition by Germany could adversely affect their efforts to reach a settlement with Britain and might be construed in Britain as the start of creating an anti-British bloc. It will not be altogether easy to clarify this preliminary question; any sounding of this nature would have to be undertaken with caution so as not to end by causing ill feeling in Rome. As soon as this preliminary question has been clarified, it would have to be considered what price Italy could pay us and further whether it would be better to demand a price or to perform the act of recognition as a unilateral and disinterested expression of friendship for Italy.<sup>3</sup> It would probably be better, should we decide to take such action at all, to do so without anything in return; the psychological effect in Italy would be the greater and our expectation that Italy would then no longer join the Stresa front would in any case rest on none too sure a foundation.

The most important question is that of the repercussions of such a step on Britain and the rest of the world. There is no doubt that only a short while ago such action by Germany would have had a very unfavourable effect in Britain and in most of the League of Nations States. But things have developed very rapidly in the meantime and in Britain in particular the realization has quickly been growing that Italy's annexation of Abyssinia is an unalterable fact. Nevertheless, even now such action by Germany would cause a very great sensation and would provide our many opponents with a pretext for asserting that

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 368 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Correct."

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "If at all, then unconditionally."

the two States ruled by "dictators" were collaborating against the rest of the world.<sup>4</sup> This would have the unfortunate effect of focusing all attention on us and Germany would again be in the limelight in the centre of the stage. If possible we should avoid this *before* the League of Nations Assembly meets. *After* the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly, when it will probably have become apparent how little the League of Nations is capable of galvanizing itself to pass a unanimous judgement on the situation or, indeed, to take any unanimous action, and when, in the meantime, the realization that Italy's annexation of Abyssinia is irrevocable has grown still stronger throughout the world, then such a German move would probably no longer involve much objection. I admit that it will then no longer have the same effect in Italy but it will nevertheless still have a good psychological effect (perhaps even better than now when it might compromise the Italians) and we shall then still be the first to announce the official recognition. I would therefore recommend that the matter should be studied, that Herr von Hassell should carefully take soundings about the above-mentioned preliminary question and that the announcement of recognition should be envisaged for a date *after* the meeting of the League of Nations Assembly.<sup>5</sup>

Respectfully submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Whilst the British would regard a recognition by Germany as an alleviation of their position, they would, nevertheless, exploit it against us."

<sup>5</sup> In a minute of June 15 (1946/435668-69) Benzler noted that Sarnow had been instructed, before his departure for the economic negotiations in Rome (see document No. 398), that, whilst there was no objection in principle to the inclusion of Abyssinia in the clearing agreement, he should avoid any formula which might suggest political recognition by Germany. In a minute of July 2 (1946/435670) Benzler noted that Sarnow had informed him after his return that the problem had not been included in the agreements reached.

## No. 371

1744/402779

### *The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 73 of June 14

VIENNA, June 14, 1936—12:20 p.m.

Received June 14—2:40 p.m.

Pol. IV 675.

With reference to your telegram No. 58 of [June] 13.<sup>1</sup>

Your assessment of the situation is fully shared here. I therefore arranged with Glaise-Horstenau the day before yesterday that I should

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 369.



confine myself to discussing political relations between Austria and the Reich, whilst leaving the discussion of problems of domestic policy entirely to him.

PAPEN

## No. 372

2381/498909-11

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV*

SECRET

BERLIN, June 15, 1936.

Colonel Tschunke, the Military Attaché in Prague, arrived on Saturday, bringing with him the attached letter which, in accordance with instructions from the Minister there given to me orally, I opened in order to take note of the contents. Herr T[schunke] further reported that, according to the information of the British Legation in Prague, the Czechoslovak Government, as was to have been expected, had unfortunately concerned themselves with the events which had taken place in the Sudeten-German party.<sup>1</sup> Brandt's [*sic*] correspondence is said to have been confiscated and his arrest, as well as that of Frank, Köllner,<sup>2</sup> Semkowski<sup>3</sup> amongst others, is imminent. According to information to hand, the matter is at present before Dr. Beneš himself. The object of the Czechoslovak Government's action is said to be to create grounds for dissolving the Sudeten German Party by exposing the connections between that Party and the Reich and to enlighten public opinion abroad, especially in Britain, as to the tactics employed by the Reich against Czechoslovakia. The British Legation in Prague is said to have seen part of the Brandt [*sic*] correspondence already, partly in the form of copies, partly in the original.<sup>4</sup>

ALTENBURG

<sup>1</sup> See also enclosure 2 and document No. 364.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Fritz Köllner, a Sudeten German Deputy; see also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 357, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> This should presumably read: "Sebekowski"; see enclosure 2.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "[For the] F[oreign] M[inister]. D[irector]. This may become a very serious matter. Col. Tschunke will be here for discussion tomorrow. Only then will it be possible to envisage the action which should be taken—possibly a warning despatch for information to London. What the confiscated correspondence contains we do not know. We never negotiated with Brandt [*sic*]. He was however Henlein's chief confidant and has therefore certainly been fully informed about all Henlein's affairs. R[enthe] F[ink], June 15." (ii) "Have reported to the F[oreign] M[inister] today. He telephoned R[eich] M[inister] Hess at once and ascertained that there is complete unanimity of view that the unity of the Sudeten German community under Henlein's leadership must be maintained at all costs. D[ieckhoff], June 17." An attached minute (2381/498908) reads: "Minister Eisenlohr has been asked to come to Berlin for personal discussions at the beginning of next week (today's telegr[am] No. 63 (9690/E681956)) from M[inisterial] d[irektor] Dieckhoff). W[oermann], June 18." No record of Eisenlohr's discussions in Berlin has been found.

[Enclosure 1]

MOST URGENT

PRAGUE, June 13, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON RENTHE-FINK: With reference to my Top Secret telegram No. 59 of June 11<sup>5</sup> I venture to send you herewith a communiqué taken from the *Prager Presse*<sup>6</sup> according to which negotiations between Konrad Henlein and Rudolf Kasper have finally broken down.

Kasper, for his part, has given a confidant of mine the statement which I also enclose,<sup>7</sup> which shows that the negotiations broke down solely because Kasper was expected at the last moment, contrary to what had been agreed, to attest that the attacks on Brand were unjustified. Kasper's statement also shows that he is still prepared for a reconciliation.

It does not therefore seem to me to be necessary to abandon all hope. On the other hand, the course of events has certainly shown that the negotiating parties lacked the necessary power and insight to achieve genuine unity.

The opportunities of exercising influence available to my Legation are of course extremely limited. We must, however, reckon with the possibility that a free-for-all may develop within the SdP [Sudeten German Party] and that all discretion, even with regard to Reich authorities, might then be thrown to the winds. For this reason even more caution than ever is necessary in exerting influence or rendering assistance in this respect. I shall try to continue to keep myself informed and propose to do nothing without having consulted with Berlin.

I am sending this interim report in haste as a courier to Berlin happens to be available. I will send further details if necessary by telegram.

Heil Hitler!

Yours,

EISENLOHR

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<sup>5</sup> Document No. 364.

<sup>6</sup> Of June 13, for this press cutting see enclosure 2.

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (2381/498912). A longer, unsigned and unfinished memorandum dated June 12 (2381/498914-26) which has been found in the files of the Foreign Ministry is evidently a record by Kasper of the events of the previous week. It is marked, in an unidentified handwriting: "[For] Herr v. Kursell personally" (see also document No. 480 and footnote 1 thereto).

6008/E443236-36/1

[Enclosure 2]

HENLEIN'S BREACH WITH KASPER FINAL.  
A COMMUNIQUÉ FROM THE SdP

Prague, June 12. The Press Office of the Sudeten German Party announces:

"Konrad Henlein, at Rudolf Kasper's request, enabled the latter to resume this Friday morning the discussion which began on Thursday

evening and which was accompanied by frequent consultations between Rudolf Kasper and his friends who were present in Eger.

"In the course of the discussion Konrad Henlein made clear the conditions under which Rudolf Kasper's continued collaboration in the Party and, at the same time, his return to his offices could be accepted. As Rudolf Kasper had requested further time for consideration until 7 p.m., Rudolf Kasper and his friends on the one hand and the representative of the SdP, Deputy Rudolf Sandner, on the other, returned to Prague where the negotiations were to be concluded.

"After a further postponement of these final discussions at the request of Rudolf Kasper, the discussions were resumed after 8 p.m. but broke up without result within a few minutes. Konrad Henlein's last attempt to enable Rudolf Kasper to continue to cooperate in the Movement would thus seem finally to have broken down."

The struggle between Konrad Henlein and his closest associates on the one side and Rudolf Kasper together with a number of opposition Deputies and Party functionaries on the other, which had been latent for some time, resulted in an open breach when on May 29 *Die Zeit*,<sup>8</sup> under the headline "Changes of Office in the SdP", reported that the member of the Central Executive Committee and Head of the Central Office for worker's and employees' affairs of the SdP, Rudolf Kasper, had—allegedly at his own request—been relieved of his posts. At the same time *Die Zeit* reported a number of further disciplinary actions and expulsions from the Party. The two latest numbers of the *Rundschau*<sup>9</sup> then carried sensational articles concerning an alleged "conspiracy" against Henlein in which the most serious charges and accusations were made both against Rudolf Kasper and the so-called "revolutionary [*Aufbruch*]" clique. The *Rundschau* of July 6 said amongst other things of Kasper: "It is the tragic guilt of a man who was fitted for great and decisive achievements that, through his silence and his support of people who endanger the unity of the Sudeten-Germany community, he has made himself an accessory to acts which he cannot defend."

In spite of these grave accusations, Konrad Henlein, under pressure put upon the Central Executive by the many Ortsgruppen of the Party who openly supported Kasper, was obliged to decide on June 7 to open negotiations with Kasper. All SdP fixtures, even the meeting of the Central Executive Council which was set for last Sunday in Eger, were cancelled, a truce was declared, and a decision announced for the week of June 8–15. This decision has now been made: The attempt to heal the breach and bridge the differences between Kasper and his friends

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<sup>8</sup> Sudeten German Party daily paper.

<sup>9</sup> Sudeten German Party weekly paper.

on the one hand and Henlein and the Central Executive of the SdP on the other has finally failed, after lengthy negotiations. One of the most important reasons for the failure of the negotiations will no doubt have been that, whilst Henlein was prepared to make concessions to Kasper himself, he could not bring himself to give way to Kasper's friends who had been described in the harshest terms as "rebels" and "conspirators". Nor is there any doubt that a contributory cause of the decision has been the influence over Henlein possessed by Herren Brand, Sebekowski, etc., against whom the attacks of Kasper, Liebl, etc., were primarily directed.

The consequences of this decision for the future of the Henlein Party must be regarded as very far-reaching, not least because, as the resolutions of many Ortsgruppen have shown, a considerable proportion of the SdP members in the provinces are clearly on the side of Kasper.

### No. 373

5809/E423703-04

#### *The Consul General at Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

DANZIG, June 16, 1936—5:00 p.m.

TOP SECRET

Received June 16—7:20 p.m.

No. 13 of June 16

Pol. V 846.

For the State Secretary personally.

The High Commissioner<sup>1</sup> has just told me, in a conversation which he himself requested, that he must draw my attention in a most serious way to the following:

(1) Gauleiter Forster<sup>2</sup> had in the last few days started a campaign against the opposition party which had led to most regrettable excesses, including loss of life,<sup>3</sup> and that he [the High Commissioner] could not remain a passive onlooker.

(2) Forster, in public speeches, was invoking his position of confidence with the Führer and Chancellor, which might easily create the impression that the Führer approved his conduct.

(3) He—the High Commissioner—took an extremely grave view of the situation and would not for a moment hesitate to make use of the powers at his disposal should occasion arise.

<sup>1</sup> Séan Lester, League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig.

<sup>2</sup> Albert Forster, Gauleiter of Danzig.

<sup>3</sup> A meeting held on June 12 by the Deutschnationale Volkspartei, one of the opposition parties in Danzig, had been broken up by National Socialist elements. For the High Commissioner's report on the situation in Danzig, dated June 30, 1936, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, July 1936, pp. 895-903. Radowitz had reported on the riots in telegram No. 12 of June 13 (9164/E644546) and despatch IG 669 II of June 15 (1723/399475-89).



(4) Since, in view of events, he had no confidence in the impartiality of the Danzig police, he would not hesitate to request another police force from the League of Nations Council—either an international or a Polish one as the Council might see fit.

It does indeed seem as though the political calm and open improvement in the situation achieved during the last few months through the well-considered attitude of the President of the Senate<sup>4</sup> has been most seriously jeopardized by the events of recent days. Irresponsible conduct on the occasion of the assembly of the *Deutschnationale Volkspartei* has cost the Movement loss of life, and has furthermore also made the worst possible impression on the Polish representation.<sup>5</sup> In view of Danzig's precarious situation such methods are quite useless, dangerous, and ultimately harmful to the Movement in general. Forster is intending to proceed with the utmost rigour against the Opposition in the next few weeks, but proposes to make further proceedings dependent on his conversation with the Führer at noon on Friday, June 19.<sup>6</sup> It appears urgently desirable for President of the Senate Greiser to be summoned to Minister President Göring *before this* in order to obtain emphatic confirmation for his well-considered attitude of taking the general situation into account.

In order to keep the situation on the lines which are politically desired, there is, according to my many years' experience, no other solution but to have a complete and constant supervision of the measures taken by the *Gauleitung* through an authoritative agency in the Reich.<sup>7</sup>

RADOWITZ

<sup>4</sup> Artur Greiser, President of the Danzig Senate; see also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 546.

<sup>5</sup> Radowitz had reported by telephone earlier that day, amongst other matters, that the Polish diplomatic representative in Danzig, M. Papée, had made representations to the Senate and asked for information (memorandum by Counsellor Bergman of June 16; 3627/E028160-61).

<sup>6</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note: "Reported to the Foreign Minister this morning. He has directed me to request Min[ister] Pres[ident] Göring, who is out of Berlin today, by telephone to ask Greiser to come as soon as possible. D[ieckhoff], June 17." In a minute of June 17 (116/66233) Dieckhoff noted that Göring had promised to contact Greiser at once and get him to come to Berlin. In a memorandum, also of June 17 (3627/E028164) Renthe-Fink recorded that Radowitz had telephoned to say that this conference was to take place the following day at an estate in Pomerania where Göring was staying and that Greiser had requested Radowitz to accompany him; permission for this had been given and Radowitz instructed to make a personal report to the Foreign Ministry on this meeting. No record of the Göring-Greiser meeting or of a report on it by Radowitz has been found.

## No. 374

1650/391877-78

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 54 of June 16

PRAGUE, June 16, 1936—8:35 p.m.

Received—10:35 p.m.

Pol. IV 737.

With reference to your telegram No. 62 of [June] 16.<sup>1</sup>

Krofta asked me to come and see him yesterday about a question of trade policy. I took the opportunity of questioning him about the outcome of the meeting at Bucharest of the Heads of State of the Little Entente.<sup>2</sup> He informed me that all possible contingencies had been discussed and that it had been agreed that all three States would adopt the same attitude towards every question that arose, but he denied that the importance of the Conference had been materially greater than that of the Foreign Ministers in Belgrade,<sup>3</sup> or that it had already now been laid down in advance what the joint attitude of the three countries would be in any one conceivable case, e.g., that of the *Anschluss*. Furthermore he stated quite unequivocally that the Rumanian Government were proposing to conclude a pact with Russia, similar to the one already concluded by Czechoslovakia, to which Yugoslavia, despite her different attitude towards Soviet Russia, had made no objections. Surprised at my displeasure, he said that Titulescu had, after all, already made this intention known. When I said that the making of pacts was evidently going ahead and asked to what end it would all lead, he countered by asking: "Do you then believe that Czechoslovakia wants war or that Russia wants war?" I replied that had this question been asked about Russia in 1890 the answer would probably have been in the negative, and yet, a quarter of a century later, the Franco-Russian alliance had led to war.

A few weeks ago Krofta told an informant that the French alliance had so greatly decreased in value as a result of the reoccupation of the Rhineland, that Czechoslovakia, in playing her hand, would have to rely more and more on the Russian card. Clearly this conception is also gaining ground in Rumania.<sup>4</sup>

EISENLOHR

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1650/391876).

<sup>2</sup> Held from June 6-8. The relevant reports received in and circulated by the Foreign Ministry have been filmed on Serial 1895.

<sup>3</sup> Held on May 6-7, see also footnote 2 above.

<sup>4</sup> The text of the document here printed was repeated for information by telegram, dated June 17 and sent on June 18 (9560/E673006), to the Missions in Paris, London, Moscow, Warsaw, Rome, Budapest and Bucharest (No. 88), and as No. 74 to Belgrade (9560/E673007) with the request for a telegraphic report as to whether anything was known about the imminent conclusion of a Russo-Rumanian pact.

## No. 375

3610/E026888

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 494

BERLIN, June 16, 1936.  
Pol. I 565.

During his visit today the British Ambassador<sup>1</sup> asked me when did we think to reply to the British questionnaire?<sup>2</sup> I replied that I could not yet give him any information on the subject. Moreover, I added, he ought not to be surprised that we had as yet not replied to these questions, when he considered the chaotic state of international politics in general and the League of Nations system in particular during the last few weeks. It could not be expected of us that we alone should bind our policy to a definite line, when all other States did not know what policy they should pursue; this applied both to France and, most particularly, to Britain. Developments in the international situation during the last few weeks had clearly shown how mistaken had been the methods adopted by Britain in hoping to solve intricate political problems by means of questionnaires, which were [then] made public. The Ambassador raised no objections to my line of argument but seemed rather to be in general agreement with it.<sup>3</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> Sir Eric Phipps.<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313.<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "[To] Pol. A. I have sent a copy to Bismarck with today's courier. D[ieckhoff], June 16." See also document No. 379.

## No. 376

3564/E023611-13

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

1680 Wi 5

BELGRADE, June 16, 1936.  
Received June 19.  
Pol. IV 839.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Visit of President of the Reichsbank Dr. Schacht, to Belgrade.

The return visit<sup>1</sup> which the President of the Reichsbank paid to the Governor of the Yugoslav National Bank in Belgrade from June 11 to 13 has caused lively interest and great satisfaction, not only amongst the authorities directly concerned but quite generally throughout the country's Government and economic circles. The circumstance that

<sup>1</sup> No record of a visit by Yugoslav bank officials to Berlin has been found.

the President of the Reichsbank chose Belgrade as the first stage of his tour<sup>2</sup> was considered to be a proof of the importance of the Yugoslav market in German eyes and people were determined from the start to make this important visitor's stay in Belgrade as pleasant as possible. The Governor of the National Bank provided a villa for his accommodation, Prince Paul gave a luncheon in his honour and presented the President of the Reichsbank with the decoration bestowed on visiting Ministers from abroad (Yugoslav Crown 1st class), the Minister President himself attended the dinner which was given at the Legation for a very select group of guests and which was followed by a larger reception, the Minister for Trade gave a fairly large luncheon party, and the Governor of the National Bank a banquet.

Apart from the discussions relating to current questions arising from the German-Yugoslav Clearing, the contents and outcome of which form the subject of a separate report,<sup>3</sup> the President of the Reichsbank had frequent opportunities of discussing in detail, both with the competent Ministers and, above all, with Minister President Stojadinović himself, all problems concerning our trade with Yugoslavia and the possibilities of further expanding it. In these discussions Dr. Schacht laid particular emphasis on Germany's willingness to cooperate in the exploitation of such Yugoslav minerals as are of interest to the German market in a way which, in contrast to previous practice in the investment of foreign capital in this field, would take fully into consideration the legitimate interests of the Yugoslav State. The Minister President showed great interest in these ideas. It was agreed that the resources in question (iron deposits near Ljubljana, etc.) should first of all be investigated by German experts for quality and workability. The possibility was also touched upon of a considerable contribution by the German armament industry towards Yugoslavia's arms requirements, at which Minister President Stojadinović announced his firm intention of overcoming in future more successfully than hitherto the political obstacles in this sphere.

During the Reichsbank President's conversations with the Prince Regent the latter repeatedly reverted to questions relating to the

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<sup>2</sup> During his tour Schacht, after spending the night of June 10-11 in Vienna, visited Belgrade June 11-13, Athens June 13-15, Sofia June 15-17, Budapest June 17-19. For the relevant despatch from Athens see document No. 383. No reports from Sofia have been found. Mackensen, reporting on the visit to Budapest in despatch B 474 IX 15 of June 22 (7420/E539430-37), mentioned that Schacht would himself report on the technical aspects. No reports by Schacht have been found in the Foreign Ministry files but under a letter dated July 2 (7253/E532148-54) Oberregierungsrat Reinhardt of the Ministry of Economics sent Benzler, of the Economic Department, at the latter's request, a report of the engagements undertaken during the tour to which were annexed, in addition to several DNB reports, memoranda on the following conversations: with the Yugoslav National Bank (see also footnote 3 below); with the Governor of the Bank of Greece (see also document No. 383 and footnote 6 thereto); with the Bulgarian National Bank and with the Bulgarian Minister of Agriculture.

<sup>3</sup> This was report 1560 Wi 5 of June 17 (7273/E533768-70).



general political situation. The Prince Regent showed special interest in Berlin's views on British policy and the prospects of a German-British *rapprochement*. The President of the Reichsbank told me that he had gained the definite impression from this conversation, the tone of which was extraordinarily friendly, that the Prince Regent viewed the new Germany with genuine sympathy and would welcome closer collaboration with Germany not only in economic matters but also politically within the framework of existing commitments.

The President of the Reichsbank's visit to Belgrade will undoubtedly be of great and lasting benefit to the favourable development of Yugoslav-German relations. Just at the present time, when Yugoslavia's economic policy is daily proved anew to be vitally dependent on the German export market and when Yugoslav foreign policy is casting about for fresh sources of support, this personal contact with the man who is at the head of the German economy, a man whose authority in the field of international economics and finance is undisputed, must impart to statesmen here a strong impetus towards developing good relations with that European Great Power of whose clear and well-planned economic policy the President of the Reichsbank's every observation gave convincing proof.

HEEREN

## No. 377

1946/435673

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 126

BERLIN, June 17, 1936—8:15 p.m.

Pol. VII 448.

For the Ambassador personally.

[With reference to your conversations here.]<sup>1</sup>

At tomorrow's conversation you should merely indicate cautiously that the impression prevails here that the Italian Government do not at present attach any great importance to the recognition of the annexation of Abyssinia. Please report by telegram on how your statement is received.<sup>2</sup>

NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> The passage in parentheses was deleted from the draft. For the only record found of Hassell's conversations in Berlin at this time see document No. 368.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 381.

## No. 378

116/66568-70

*Memorandum by the State Secretary and Head of the  
Presidential Chancellery*

BERLIN, June 17, 1936.  
zu Prot. 5117 I 68 Akel.<sup>1</sup>

The Führer and Chancellor today received the newly appointed Estonian Foreign Minister, Akel, who has hitherto been Estonian Minister in Berlin.

In the course of the conversation Minister Akel asked the Führer whether Germany was prepared to conclude a non-aggression pact with Estonia too, although Estonia was not one of her immediate territorial neighbours.

The Führer replied at some length that in his Reichstag speech<sup>2</sup> he had admittedly confined Germany's readiness to conclude non-aggression pacts to her territorial neighbours. This, he said, had been done especially with an eye on Russia; we were separated from Bolshevik Russia by so great a gulf that for ideological reasons we desired no closer connections or treaty arrangements of any kind with that country.

On the other hand, we desired to live on the best of terms with the Baltic States, which represented a glacis for the European anti-Bolshevik Powers against Russia. This also applied to Lithuania, whose Government were pursuing a very foolish policy *vis-à-vis* ourselves, but with whom we could live in harmony if that country gave up the senseless persecution of the Memel Germans. On principle, therefore, there were no objections to including Estonia too in the non-aggression pacts with the other Baltic States, although she was not an immediate neighbour.

MEISSNER

## ADDENDUM

TO THE MEMORANDUM BY STATE SECRETARY MEISSNER  
ON THE CONVERSATION BETWEEN THE FÜHRER AND  
THE ESTONIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AKEL

BERLIN, June 19, 1936.

The Führer declared that the rejection of closer relations with Russia applied only to Bolshevik Russia, not to the Russian people,

<sup>1</sup> Not found; this was presumably the number under which Meissner's covering letter was filed.

<sup>2</sup> On Mar. 7, 1936; see Editors' Note, p. 31.

with whom we would gladly be on the best of terms. It also went without saying that we stood by the treaties which we had concluded with the Russian Government (Berlin Treaty).<sup>3</sup>

V. N[EURATH]

<sup>3</sup> The Treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union signed at Berlin, Apr. 24, 1926, and the Convention of Conciliation signed at Moscow, Jan. 25, 1929, both prolonged by a Protocol signed at Moscow, June 24, 1931 (for the texts see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LIII, pp. 387-396, vol. xc, pp. 219-231, and vol. CLVII, pp. 383-391, respectively and ratifications exchanged on May 5, 1933 (see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1933, Part II, pp. 311-312, and vol. I of this Series, documents Nos. 194 and 212).

## No. 379

3610/E026885-87

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 122 of June 17, 1936

LONDON, June 17, 1936.

Received June 18, 9:30 a.m.

Pol. I 564.

Today I called on Wigram, whom I had not seen for quite some time, in order to discuss the political situation with him. He immediately and of his own accord raised the question of our reply to the British questionnaire and declared that the Foreign Office were extremely displeased and disappointed that the German reply had been further postponed. After he had read out to me extracts from a telegram from Phipps about his yesterday's conversation with the Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> he pointed out that, during the first conversation between Phipps and the Führer and Chancellor on May 14,<sup>2</sup> the latter had declared that before making a reply we must await the formation of a French Government and plans for a reform of the League of Nations. Ambassador von Ribbentrop, too, had spoken in similar terms to Phipps during their conversation on May 26,<sup>3</sup> while at yesterday's conversation the Foreign Minister had declared that we must first wait and see what the French Government's attitude with regard to foreign policy would be and had expressed doubt as to whether the Blum Government would in any case be strong enough, despite their fundamental desire to create good relations with Germany, to carry out this programme; moreover, we must also first wait for a decision in the sanctions question. Thus a further considerable delay in the German reply was to be expected since, particularly where the sanctions question was concerned, it was not known here [in London] whether the Reich Government intended to wait only for Eden's statement

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 375.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 326.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 348.

tomorrow in the House of Commons<sup>4</sup> or possibly also for resolutions at the League of Nations Assembly or even, in addition, for the introduction of a reform of the League of Nations.

As he had said, there was extreme displeasure in the Foreign Office about these German delaying tactics, which could in no way be made to accord with the German statements made in March of this year. When communicating the Locarno Memorandum<sup>5</sup> Herr von Hoesch had pointed out to Eden that the first part of his information would make an unpleasant impression upon Eden, but that he must place primary emphasis on the second part, namely, the German peace proposal. During one of the conversations held by Ambassador von Ribbentrop and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff with Eden, the former had also asked that the main emphasis be laid on the Führer's Peace Plan,<sup>6</sup> which he had described as epoch-making. The German side had envisaged a period of four months for the duration of the necessary negotiations and it was precisely the shortness of this interval which the German side had given as their reason for regarding the German concessions over the Rhineland fortifications, demanded by the other side, as superfluous.

Over six weeks had now gone by since the communication of the British questionnaire; to Phipps' various *démarches* answers had been given which only put off the reply still longer and the mission of Lord Halifax to Berlin,<sup>7</sup> which the Cabinet here urgently desired, had also been postponed over there. It was therefore understandable that there should be displeasure here and that one could form no idea of the intentions of German policy.

In my reply I took the view that the blame for this whole situation lay with the British questionnaire. Weeks before its despatch its contents had been the subject of sensational speculation on the part of the entire world press and, in fact, the text, which had regrettably been published immediately upon communication, was most unsuited to further the proposed negotiations. Never had there been put to a free and independent people such questions of conscience, which at the same time cast doubts upon their sincerity. I was convinced that if the British Government had confined themselves to getting certain really practical points in the German Peace Plan which they found obscure clarified orally through Phipps, the German side would have replied immediately. With regard, however, to the so-called "questions of conscience", these were not only highly superfluous

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<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 639.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., the German Memorandum of Mar. 7 (document No. 3, enclosure); for Hoesch's account of his interview with Eden on Mar. 7 see document No. 21.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., document No. 242.

<sup>7</sup> The possibility of a visit to Berlin by Lord Halifax had been mooted in the British press on May 8; see also documents Nos. 322, 326 and 367.



and offensive to Germany, but the reply to them already lay in the German proposals for non-aggression pacts and in particular in our readiness to return to the League of Nations.

Precisely this last argument caused Wigram visible embarrassment and it was in general my impression that my sharp attack on the questionnaire had touched him on a particularly sensitive spot.

Wigram closed the conversation with the remark that it was in any case for Germany to take the next step and that it should cause no surprise there if the displeasure here about the German failure to furnish a reply continued to increase.

BISMARCK

## No. 380

1650/391880-86<sup>1</sup>

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Rumania*

Telegram

No. 89 of June 18

BERLIN, June 18, 1936—8:20 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 737<sup>2</sup> Ang. III.

With reference to my [telegram] No. 88 of June 17.<sup>2</sup>

The Czechoslovak Foreign Minister's statements to Eisenlohr are in direct contradiction to all the previous very emphatic assurances which have been made repeatedly, and in the name of Titulescu, by the Rumanian Minister here, and of which you are aware.

You should at once raise the matter of Krofta's statements with the Foreign Minister or his representative and ask whether the information is correct. Should this prove to be the case you should pointedly draw attention to the serious situation which cannot fail to supervene in German-Rumanian relations in consequence of Rumania's intention of joining in the encirclement policy against Germany. In any case we should be unable to leave this new turn in Rumanian policy out of account in shaping our own policy towards Rumania.

You should report by telegram.<sup>3</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> These frame numbers include the draft, with time of despatch, and the fair copy.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 374 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 385.

## No. 381

7197/E529654-56

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 96 of June 18

ROME, June 18, 1936—10:00 p.m.

Received June 19—12:45 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 126 of June 17.<sup>1</sup>

(1) During my first visit today to Ciano since he became Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> he began by saying that he intended to conduct his foreign policy on the basis of the views which, as I knew, he had always upheld hitherto and the friendly inclination of which towards Germany was no secret to anyone. At the same time he expressed gratitude for the friendly reception accorded to his wife in Berlin. When going over the political situation, Ciano stressed that he had only assumed office a few days ago and had therefore not yet familiarized himself with the various problems. This applied particularly to the Austrian question. On a deliberate mention [*sic*]<sup>3</sup> of rumours about an impending Habsburg restoration, he described these rumours as attempts to upset the German-Italian *rapprochement* which our opponents felt to be a danger in view of the events of the last few months, the latest of which were his wife's visit to Berlin and his appointment as Foreign Minister. Italy's policy was at present governed entirely by the sanctions question. Having just had a telephone conversation with Grandi, he regarded the situation as favourable; nevertheless, it would be wrong to speak of the battle as being already won. Italy's next action would be to despatch a memorandum to the League of Nations, in which she would give an historical record of the course of events, especially of the fact that there had long been readiness to negotiate, which had been dispelled, not by Italian attacks but by the Abyssinians taking the offensive, whilst finally, the Negus' flight had fundamentally changed the whole situation. In the memorandum, on the basis of adhering to the *fait accompli*, Italy would of her own accord, give assurances to the League of Nations in accordance with the various paragraphs of Article 23 of the Covenant of the League of Nations and with regard to refraining from raising a large coloured army. I mentioned that the idea was cropping up in many reports that, though sanctions should be lifted,

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 377.

<sup>2</sup> In a Cabinet reshuffle on June 9, Count Ciano, hitherto Minister for Press and Propaganda, became Foreign Minister (Mussolini having previously combined this post with his other functions); the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Suvich, was replaced by the former Ambassador to Poland, Bastianini; and the former Under Secretary of State for Propaganda, Alfieri, was appointed Minister in Ciano's place.

<sup>3</sup> The draft in the Rome Embassy files (3793/E042457-62) here reads: "On my mentioning rumours . . ."

recognition of the *fait accompli* should be refused. Ciano replied that the cause of this was evidently Argentina's unsuccessful move<sup>4</sup> which had only created fresh confusion. The decisive issue at present was the sanctions question. Only afterwards would the matter of recognition become actual. Italy could remain indifferent to any League of Nations resolution rejecting, in theory, the recognition of changes brought about by the use of force; a resolution rejecting actual recognition of the annexation of Abyssinia would be a serious matter. Hereupon I remarked that I had found the impression . . . (group mutilated)<sup>5</sup> in Berlin that at present Italy attached no special importance to recognition by Germany. At first Ciano replied, with some surprise, that this was not at all the case; the greatest importance was, of course, attached to recognition, but not, however, at the present moment when, as he had stated, the question of sanctions held first place. Nor was it necessary for recognition immediately to be given directly and formally; indirect recognition was also conceivable, e.g., by employing the appropriate terms in official documents—and here, in answer to a question from me, he confirmed that he was alluding to the impending presentation of the Austrian Minister's credentials.<sup>6</sup> I remarked that, in that case, the impression I had gained in Berlin was correct: there was no particular pressure for recognition at the present moment. This he confirmed, and asked whether Italy could accordingly count on a benevolent attitude on the part of Germany as soon as the question became acute. I replied that I could not say anything about this as the question had not been discussed in Berlin, but only that the impression which I had described had been evident.

In view of all this there can be no doubt about Ciano's views,<sup>7</sup> but I am not altogether certain that he has thought the problem over thoroughly and discussed it with Mussolini. Bastianini, the new Under Secretary of State, will call on me on Saturday to mark his entry into office. Should he make any further comments I shall report further by telegram.

(2) The background to the change of Ministers if it is placed [*sic*]<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> On June 2 Argentina's Permanent Delegate to Geneva, Señor Ruiz Guinazu, submitted a Note to the Secretary General of the League of Nations, requesting that the Assembly be summoned in the course of June to discuss the consequences of the annexation of Abyssinia and the situation with regard to sanctions. See League of Nations: *Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, Special Supplement No. 151, pp. 97-98.

<sup>5</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 3 above) here reads: "prevalent".

<sup>6</sup> Egon Freiherr von Berger-Waldenegg, previously Austrian Foreign Minister, was appointed Austrian Minister in Italy on May 26, 1936.

<sup>7</sup> For Ciano's record of this conversation see Galeazzo Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe* (Milan, 1948), pp. 23-24; English translation: *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers* (London, 1948), pp. 5-6.

<sup>8</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 3 above) here reads: "... is illuminated by the statements . . ."



in the light of the statements Suvich made to me this morning when we happened to meet: When I expressed my regret that our collaboration, which had lasted almost four years, was coming to an end, he said that he regretted this the more, as he had hoped first to relieve German-Italian relations of the troublesome and unnecessary encumbrance, the sole remaining one, which Austria represented. He had of late been suffering a great deal of annoyance in that a certain quarter in Italy had been accusing him of being a fanatic for Austrian independence and therefore of impeding good German-Italian relations. He had, indeed, never concealed his views on this question, not even at the time when he visited Berlin,<sup>9</sup> and had always said that in present conditions he regarded Austria's independence as a prerequisite for friendship between Germany and Italy; but this did not mean that he had obstructed good German-Italian relations, quite the contrary. He had complained to Mussolini, too, about these accusations and would also write to Attolico on the subject before leaving for Washington.<sup>10</sup> Mussolini had advised him to grant the *Völkischer Beobachter* an interview on his attitude. However, he (Suvich) had noticed that no such charges had been levelled at him by public opinion in Germany and he had therefore refrained from an interview.

These statements make it clear that the re-orientation of Italy's policy towards Germany has played a part in the change of Foreign Ministers.

HASSELL

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<sup>9</sup> In December 1933, see vol. II of this Series, documents Nos. 120 and 126.

<sup>10</sup> Suvich took up his post as Italian Ambassador in the United States in October 1936.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On June 18, 1936, the British Foreign Secretary, Anthony Eden, informed the House of Commons that the British Government had come to the conclusion that there was no longer any utility in continuing sanctions against Italy and, while they would concur in whatever decision the League of Nations Assembly was going to take at its next meeting at the end of June, they would take this view at that meeting. For the text of Eden's statement see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 313, cols. 1197-1211. At a Cabinet Council held on June 19, the French Government, too, decided to accept the abolition of sanctions if the League of Nations should take a decision in this sense (see *Le Temps* of June 20, 1936). The abolition of sanctions was, in fact, recommended by the League of Nations Assembly on July 4 and by the Coordination Committee on July 6, to become effective on July 15, 1936; see League of Nations: *Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, Special Supplement No. 151, pp. 65-68, and League of Nations: *Official Journal, Dispute between Ethiopia and Italy*, Special Supplement No. 149, pp. 58-63.]



## No. 382

9585/E675574-77

*The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

A. II. f.3. geh. Akten

PRAGUE, June 18, 1936.

Received June 19.

W. Spec. 1080.

Subject: Financial support for the German community in Czechoslovakia.

With reference to your despatch W. Spec. 142 of January 31, 1936,<sup>1</sup> and to my report A. II. f.3. geh. Akten of February 12, 1936.<sup>2</sup>

I have once more made a thorough study of the question of financial support for the German community in Czechoslovakia. In accordance with your despatch under reference I concentrated my study chiefly on the question of support for peasant properties. In my report of February 12 last I stated in paragraph 1 on page 4 [*sic*: 3]: "As regards the liquidation of agricultural indebtedness and the support of agriculture everything is therefore at the moment in a state of flux." Meanwhile, however, the situation here has been clarified so that I am compelled to supplement my report. One consequence of the increasing tension in the relations between the Sudeten Germans and the Czechs is that the granting of credits by Czechs to Sudeten Germans is now only considered if the Czechoslovak Credit Institute is certain of getting the property into Czech hands as a result of granting the credit. The existing Sudeten German credit organizations are breaking down, since it is no longer possible to meet the increasing demands from the normal funds available for credit transactions. With regard to peasant properties, conditions are particularly difficult in the Sudeten German border area, in the Schönhengst Gau and in the Iglau language enclave. I should like to point out in this connection that, apart from peasant property, small encumbered house and landed property would appear to be similarly in need of assistance.

Although the capital holdings in the Sudeten German area of several cooperative credit associations (Reiffeisen Savings Banks and Sudeten German Savings Bank) are still reasonably satisfactory, these credit organizations are nevertheless in general no longer able, in many cases as a result of their own difficult position, to protect Sudeten German house and landed property as adequately as is necessary from the aspect of the self preservation of the national community. Especially where German property is encumbered with Czech mortgages it is generally lost, since long-term capital to redeem such property is not available and the Sudeten-German credit organizations are only able

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (9585/E675549-51).

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (9585/E675559-63).

with their own funds to keep their own current transactions afloat to some extent. Even the comparatively large organization of the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen]<sup>3</sup> is unable to undertake the protection, which has today become increasingly necessary, of landed property from its own resources. Nor is the Bund der Deutschen capable of fulfilling this task from its present resources.

The time has therefore, in my opinion, come to create a fund for the preservation of German landed property in Czechoslovakia. It would soon be possible by means of such a fund to save, by subsidies for interest payments, German property which would otherwise be lost, simply because the necessary long term capital or support in the form of subsidies for interest and amortization payments are not available. There is said at the moment to be a danger that Konstantinsbad, which has so far, with great sacrifice, been kept German, may fall into Czech hands. If it were possible to establish a fund which, in expert opinion, would require a minimum of 10 million Czech crowns, the following tasks, in particular, could be assigned to such a fund:

- 1) To provide capital at cheap rates and reasonable terms of repayment in cases of estates being split up on inheritance.
- 2) To reduce the load of indebtedness of hard-pressed farmers by means of interest subsidies or guarantees.
- 3) To provide security for house property and land holdings by means of
  - a) cheap loans,
  - b) guarantees,
  - c) interest subsidies.
- 4) To acquire seriously threatened larger-scale agricultural estates temporarily and establish settlements.

This fund, which would be of tremendous importance to the Sudeten German community, would require administration by a special Board of Trustees. The best solution in my opinion would be to attach it to the Kreditanstalt der Deutschen. The director of the KdD, Herr Kiesewetter, informs me that the KdD would be willing to make its organization available for this purpose and to ensure that the fund was used in accordance with racial and sound economic principles. To entrust the KdD with the rendering of aid would have the great advantage of placing the whole question on a purely economic basis and would thus avoid the risk of compromising the authorities, especially the Foreign Exchange and Bank Control here. The requirements in foreign exchange are at present unlikely to be at all significant since a way can surely be found for the KdD to leave the fund in Germany and to have recourse to it only in case of possible losses.

EISENLOHR

<sup>3</sup> A brochure entitled *Was ist die KdD [What is the Credit Institute for Germans?]* has been filmed as 9585/E675590-618; in it are set forth the objects of the Institute, which was founded in 1911 by the Bund der Deutschen in Boehmen [League of Germans in Bohemia].

## No. 383

9328/E661510-14

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

III BK 1

ATHENS, June 18, 1936.

Received June 23.

W III S.E. 1093.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Visit of the Reich Minister of Economics to Athens. The public side of the visit. Audience with the King and investiture. The outcome of the conversations with the Greek Minister President and the Bank Governors. The press. The repercussions of the visit.

The visit of the Reich Minister of Economics, Schacht, provided an opportunity for a comprehensive review of our economic relations with Greece, and I believe I am not mistaken in saying that, apart from certain prospects of expanding Germany's military power, these economic relations constitute the basis of our political attitude. Our economic relations with Greece are characterized by the fact that we are the largest market for Greek exports and that these exports to Germany, under the terms of the clearing agreement, have led to a balance of approximately 30 million Reichsmark in Greece's favour, which can only be offset by increased imports of goods from Germany.<sup>1</sup> For the Greeks too have realized that there can be no question of any foreign exchange being made available. The imports into this country, however, are meeting, not only with difficulties arising from the clearing system, but also with reluctance on the part of this impoverished country to have too great a proportion of its exports offset by superfluous goods. The need primarily to meet requirements of essential goods and raw materials is the greatest obstacle to the expansion of our present trade.

That is in essence the background against which the Reich Minister of Economics' conversations here have been conducted.

I. The public side of the visit is described in the enclosure.<sup>2</sup> In spite of reports to the contrary in the Greek press, we adhered strictly to the point of view that the visit was merely intended to be in return for that of the directors of the Banks of Issue and therefore had no political purpose whatever. The Reich Minister of Economics was accordingly announced solely in his capacity of President of the

<sup>1</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 459 and 539.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (9328/E661515-16).



Reichsbank. If, however, there have nevertheless been announcements going beyond this they are due to the fact that it is impossible completely to separate economics and politics. Apart from the business discussion with the directors of the Bank of Issue, the climax of the visit was, therefore, the audience with the King and several conversations with the Minister President.

II. At an audience on the previous day the King had already told me how great was the interest with which he looked forward to Schacht's visit. He had not yet had an opportunity of meeting personally any of the leading men of the Third Reich (Minister President Göring's visit to Athens took place in the period before the King's return).<sup>3</sup> During the audience, which was held on the afternoon after Schacht's arrival and which lasted about half an hour, His Majesty asked how Schacht had been able to achieve his remarkable financial successes. The Reich Minister for Economics replied that he could easily explain this; he had realized that he must base his programme not on material, but on human achievement. He had above all encouraged the application of the principle: We shall buy no more than we can pay for and we shall buy only what we need. Germany was after all the only large market for South East Europe. As chief purchaser of these products, however, she had the right to expect producers to adapt themselves to this German market more than hitherto. In the long run it was not possible to expect Germany to purchase practically nothing but tobacco and raisins. Germany must above all consider her imports of raw materials. Although aware that Greece was, alas, one of the poorer countries, one must still hope that she would exploit her existing resources more than hitherto. The King replied that on his return he had found that his country had not made sufficient economic progress in any way during his absence. The beginnings of a way out of the existing monoculture did, however, exist. He referred in this connection to a British enterprise for the mining of ore in Thrace. Schacht replied that he was prepared at any time to invest capital in such an undertaking. This could easily be done by Germany's supplying materials and labour for such mining operations in return for a corresponding share in the holdings. Further, the Minister stressed once again the urgent need for placing larger orders in Germany. Neither side went into details in this connection nor were any political matters discussed.

III. The conversations with the Minister President took place chiefly on Sunday during the luncheon given by me, before which M. Metaxas invested the Minister with the Grand Cross of the Order of St. George on behalf of the King. This is the second highest Greek Order, and,

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<sup>3</sup> During his tour of South East Europe in 1935 Göring visited Athens June 2-6, see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 91. King George II returned, after a plebiscite the outcome of which was in his favour, on Nov. 25, 1935.



in view of the fact that as a rule heads of diplomatic missions who have been *en poste* here for several years are awarded the same class of the third highest Order, the Order of the Phoenix, this is a special and exceptional distinction.

Since the conversation took place after the discussion with the Bank directors, it was possible to deal with the results of this discussion. In particular it was possible to deal with the suggestion already made at the Bank, that a military purchasing commission should be sent and also to give further consideration to the idea of a future military mission for the training of Greek officers in Germany.

Obviously alarmed by demands in the press for a guarantee of Greece's credit balance against losses through currency depreciation, regarding which the Reich Minister had always stated that, though he had discussed a similar clause in connection with smaller sums in other countries, he could not give any kind of assurance for a sum of 30 million, M. Metaxas called on the Reich Minister of Economics on the very morning of his departure. The outcome of the discussion is set forth in my telegram of June 15.<sup>4</sup> The Reich Minister of Economics requested me as he left to report on this by telegram to Berlin. Immediately on my return from the airport, however, the Minister President requested me to come and see him and asked me in particular to make the enquiry about the armament for the ships (cf. my telegram No. 61 of June 15).<sup>5</sup>

It is to be hoped that similar considerations may lead to the speeding up of the other arms deliveries, and the Reich Minister of Economics intends, on his return to Berlin, to take steps in this connection to see that we for our part take the requisite action.

IV. On the substance of the conversations at the Bank of Greece I would refer to the attached memorandum by Attaché Velhagen.<sup>6</sup> As emerges from this memorandum, M. Varvaressos' observations, which coincided in every respect with the reports from the Legation, were noticeable for their far-reaching understanding of the German point of view. His impending visit to Berlin in order to continue these conversations,<sup>7</sup> a visit which he intends to combine with negotiations in London for a necessary adjustment of the excessive interest rate on the Greek debt, and the plans to send the military purchasing

<sup>4</sup> i.e., in telegram No. 62 (9414/E666089).

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (9414/E666086-87).

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (9328/E661517-20).

<sup>7</sup> M. Varvaressos visited Berlin in July when it was agreed *inter alia* that, in the event of arms orders to the extent of 60 million RM being placed by Greece, only 15 per cent of the account would have to be paid in foreign exchange and that rich ores delivered by Greece, including deliveries made since July 1, 1935, would, for purposes of this agreement, count as foreign exchange. A copy of a note to this effect dated July 18 from Reichsbank Director Wilhelm to M. Varvaressos was forwarded to Neurath under cover of a Note dated July 22 (9326/E661452-54) from the Greek Minister in Berlin recording acceptance of its provisions. Receipt was acknowledged by Neurath in a Note dated July 31 (9326/E661455).

and training mission to Germany may be regarded as concrete successes.

V. The Greek press, which is badly informed on political and economic matters, had, before Schacht's arrival, already expressed the supposition that Dr. Schacht's tour of the Balkan States was designed as an economic or even political campaign of conquest by the Third Reich in the Balkans. In particular, the press demanded above all a guarantee of Greece's credit balance arising from clearing transactions against losses through currency depreciation and the sale of German exports to Greece at world market prices and not at high German prices. The attached account<sup>8</sup> of the interview granted to Greek and foreign press representatives by the Reich Minister of Economics immediately after his visit to former Foreign Minister Streit was drawn up by the DNB's representative here. No questions were asked, apart from an enquiry as to whether the clearing agreement would be renewed, to which the Minister replied that a renewal was not required for its proposed continuance, and a request by the Reuter representative that the Minister's longer statements in German be translated so as to make them intelligible to those journalists who did not understand German, which was answered in English to the effect that Anglo-German-Greek co-operation might produce promising results. The *Messenger d'Athènes*, in an article attached as Enclosure 4<sup>9</sup> which is entitled "*Les résultats de la visite de M. Schacht à Athènes*" and dated June 16, makes some accurate but also some inaccurate statements concerning the conversations with the Bank. These statements, which evidently derive from a leakage, were at once denied by the Governors of the Bank of Issue, and M. Varvaressos has already expressed his regret over their publication. The Minister President, too had statements attributed to him in the press which he has categorically denied, remarking that one could rest assured that the Greek Government were fully capable of safeguarding the country's interests. The interview was published with comments by nearly all the newspapers. Some versions are attached in a German translation.<sup>9</sup> Only the unimportant Socialist journal *Anexartitos* has indulged in malicious comment. An article couched in very friendly language, which also deals with the personality of the Minister was published by M. Vekiarellis, the head of the local news agency, the Agence d'Athènes, in the newspaper *Ethnos* which is of good repute.

VI. In view of the nature of the visit, the Government have refrained from taking an active part in its public side. The private consultations between the Reich Minister of Economics and the representatives of the State were however conducted in a most friendly atmosphere. To sum

<sup>8</sup> Not printed (9328/E661521-22)

<sup>9</sup> Not found.

up, it can be said that the visit of the Reich Minister of Economics has not only achieved tangible results but has also considerably stimulated future German-Greek economic relations. Its effects will only become evident in the long run. Moreover, the fact of the Minister's contacts with royalist circles which emerged from, *inter alia*, his visit to Streit, has strengthened our political relations with the Crown; unless all the signs deceive us, the latter's position in internal politics may be expected to gain in strength in the near future.

PISTOR

## No. 384

6982/E521703-04

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in  
the Union of South Africa*

Telegram

No. 5 of June 19

BERLIN, June 19, 1936—6:55 p.m.  
zu Pol. I 570.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. Kap. 48.<sup>1</sup>

For the Minister personally.

1) It is not true that we replied to the suggestion of a joint trip by Pirow and Halifax to Berlin<sup>2</sup> to the effect that we saw no reason why Lord Halifax should come. Our reply was rather that the question of this trip would be considered here, but that we had heard nothing from the *British* about such a joint trip.

2) You should continue to exercise the greatest reserve in these questions. Much as we welcome the goodwill of the South African Government, Pirow's activity as an intermediary nevertheless seems to us extremely inept and based upon one-sided assumptions. That Pirow's influence in London is not very strong may besides also be gathered from the fact that Pirow was not able to put through the South African demand for the continuation of sanctions.<sup>3</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6982/E521700); in this telegram of June 17 Wiehl reported that he had been told by the State Secretary for External Affairs, Bodenstein, that the British still regarded the situation as being serious, not only because of Germany's failure to reply to the British questionnaire (see document No. 313, enclosure) but also because in reply to the suggestion that Halifax might come to Berlin, the German Government had said that they saw no reason for this visit.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 367 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting: "[Sent] after discussion with the Foreign Minister."

## No. 385

1895/426565-69

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 75 of June 19

BUCHAREST, June 19, 1936—11:10 p.m.

\* Received June 20—4:45 a.m.

Pol. IV 867.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 88 of [June] 17<sup>1</sup> and 89<sup>2</sup> of [June] 18.

1) In a conversation yesterday Titulescu told me the following about the discussions with the Little Entente:

(1) Attitude of the Little Entente to the Austrian question.

Case 1. An *Anschluss* through Germany's invading by force which, in the light of previous declarations, he considered purely theoretical. Germany would then be the aggressor and in accordance with general European and League of Nations policy action should be taken against her. The Little Entente would give its formal support to this.

Case 2. An *Anschluss* resulting from a voluntary act by Austria. This would be entirely an Italian and/or French concern. It would not affect Rumania, even if Czechoslovakia should wish to take part in an action.

Case 3. A restoration of the Habsburgs. In this case the Little Entente would mobilize and, if necessary, march into Austria. Italy would then probably also march in and since Germany would hardly stand by inactive, the Little Entente would march in by the side of Germany (Titulescu expressed himself in these terms to one of my colleagues a few days ago, describing this situation as paradoxical).

(2) Changes in the General Assembly. The Little Entente would not allow themselves to be treated differently from the Great Powers, and in particular they were entirely opposed to the directorate of the four Great Powers, Britain, France, Germany and Italy. The Little Entente rejected general military sanctions, such actions must be left to neighbouring States on the basis of any existing assistance treaties. On the other hand the Little Entente demanded more stringent economic sanctions which must also automatically become effective *vis-à-vis* those States which, like Austria and Hungary, had kept out of the Italian conflict.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 374, and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 380.



In Geneva the Little Entente were in favour of abolishing sanctions against Italy but did not wish to take the initiative, as it had been suggested to Rumania that she should do. It was not at present desired to announce recognition of the annexation [of Abyssinia].

(3) Nothing new had been agreed with regard to Russia. Titulescu emphasized that in no circumstances would he grant Russian troops right of passage through Rumania. All assertions that something had been agreed with Russia or France or Czechoslovakia in this connection were false. Rumania would not permit such passage, partly through fear that the Russians would not leave the country afterwards, but also in particular because Rumania would automatically become an opponent of Germany. Russian troops would take far too long to march across Rumania and meanwhile Rumania would already have been attacked by the victorious German armies sweeping through Czechoslovakia, and turned into a theatre of war.

(4) In reply to the question whether Rumania and the Little Entente would accept the separation of the League of Nations Covenant from the Versailles Treaty, Titulescu said, no, he would not give us this assurance in advance.

2) Discussing Rumania's general policy, Titulescu referred to the speech he made a few days ago. This had made clear his unswerving love and respect for France. In spite of this he was not dependent on France, as the foreign press asserted, but remained his own master and therefore claimed the right to maintain good relations with Germany and Russia too. Rumania had more to fear from Russia than from Germany, with whom she had no common frontier. For Czechoslovakia . . . (group missing) was quite different. He would therefore not conclude a pact with Russia similar to the Czechoslovak-Russian Pact, Rumania would not undertake any action against Germany and in particular would not come to the assistance of Czechoslovakia in a conflict with Germany or Poland; only if Hungary mobilized would Rumania be compelled to intervene.

3) At today's discussion on the basis of your telegrams under reference Titulescu stated that he had spoken to Litvinov in Geneva a year ago about concluding a treaty. He had envisaged a frontier guarantee pact with *assistance mutuelle* in the event of an attack. Litvinov had shown no knowledge of this (should surely read "understanding"). The proposed visit to Moscow had for this reason not taken place.<sup>3</sup> Russia and Czechoslovakia had later proposed to him the conclusion of a pact similar to the Czechoslovak-Russian one. He had rejected this. He had twice publicly stated that he would not conclude

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<sup>3</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, document No. 401, and footnote 7 thereto.

such a pact<sup>4</sup> and had also so informed the Reich Foreign Minister through Comnen on February 25 [*sic*]<sup>5</sup>; he adhered to this statement and he read out to me in confirmation a telegram from his Minister in Berlin. He also emphasized that, whatever else might happen, he would in any case stick to it that Rumania should never, either orally or in writing, concede to Russian troops the right of passage through Rumanian territory. Krofta's statements to Eisenlohr were incomprehensible.<sup>6</sup> What he, Titulescu, would like, would be a pact *erga omnes* as a frontier guarantee pact with Russia. Litvinov would not, however, consider this since he only wished to conclude a pact similar to that signed with Czechoslovakia. For this reason the matter was at present no longer under discussion.

4) When I asked what the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the Little Entente were at present negotiating about here,<sup>7</sup> Titulescu said that it was not the passage of Russian troops but mobilization in the event of a restoration in Austria—pure theory like a "war game" or rather a "children's game".

5) It seems to me apparent from Titulescu's statements that he is still trying to build up his relations with Soviet Russia. Although he pretends to third parties to be anti-German he certainly has a growing interest, in view of Germany's increasing military power, in not coming into conflict with us and he will therefore not sign a pact like the Czechoslovak one. I therefore indicated to him how seriously we should regard participation by Rumania in the policy of encirclement. Titulescu thereupon assured me repeatedly of the great importance he attached to good relations with Germany, adding that he adhered to what Comnen had told the Reich Foreign Minister on February 25. He was obliged, however, in the interests of his country to foster relations with Soviet Russia, and we could hardly forbid him to do so.

6) Titulescu is leaving tomorrow for Montreux.<sup>8</sup> He points out that the Turks, to whom, as allies, he wishes to give his full support, will run into difficulties on account of the differing views held by Russia and Britain.

FABRICIUS

<sup>4</sup> In a communiqué of Oct. 16, 1935 (see vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 353 and 362), and on Dec. 13, 1935, in reply to an interpellation as reported in despatch No. 3467 of Dec. 22, 1935 (9590/E676241-47).

<sup>5</sup> Presumably a reference to the conversation of Feb. 24; see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 581.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 374.

<sup>7</sup> Discussions took place on June 16-17.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

## No. 386

218/147914-15

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

RM 503

BERLIN, June 19, 1936.

W VII OA 391.

EXCERPT<sup>1</sup> FROM A MEMORANDUM BY THE FOREIGN MINISTER  
ON A CONVERSATION WITH THE JAPANESE AMBASSADOR

The Japanese Ambassador<sup>2</sup> called on me this morning and asked a number of questions.

.....<sup>3</sup>

V. At the very end the Ambassador mentioned the Klein expedition. He had heard that we, via Herr Klein, had promised the Chinese Government credits up to the value of 100 million marks.<sup>4</sup> I replied that I was only partially informed about these matters. It was certainly not true that we had held out prospects of these credits to the Chinese Government. This case was also one of a barter deal, in which we were interested in importing from China certain raw materials for which we would have to pay in goods since we had no foreign exchange available. To what extent this deal could be realized was still quite uncertain. The Ambassador further wanted to know with what kind of goods we were paying. I told him that I could not say; so far as I knew, among other things, with optical instruments, material for bridges and harbour installations, etc. But all this was still very vague.

VI. The Ambassador then asked about General von Reichenau's journey.<sup>5</sup> I told him that Herr von Reichenau had a brother in China who was working with Herr Klein, and that he had long been intending to pay him a visit and to get an idea of his activities there from his own observations.

VII. At the very end the Ambassador also spoke in a rather vague fashion about the alleged weaknesses of the Nanking Government, whose stability, he said, was generally overestimated. Many Japanese advisers were functioning with the Canton Government, as was known, and the view widespread in the world that the Canton Government were hostile to Japan was wrong. On the contrary, they wanted to come to

<sup>1</sup> The full text of the memorandum has not been found.

<sup>2</sup> Kimitomo, Viscount Mushakoji.

<sup>3</sup> These omission marks appear in the original.

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum, W VII OA 249 of June 12, 1936 (218/147896-97), Erdmannsdorff recorded a conversation with Counsellor Inouye of the Japanese Embassy, who said that Dirksen had told Mushakoji that the Chinese Government had by Klein's mediation secured a credit of 100 million Mexican dollars from Germany.

<sup>5</sup> See also documents Nos. 306, 338 and 346.

an understanding with Japan. I refrained from commenting on these remarks and merely told the Ambassador in connection with the Klein expedition that, after all, we had now entered into extensive economic agreements with the Manchukuo Government<sup>6</sup> so that the Japanese Government must surely feel satisfied on this score. This the Ambassador confirmed.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 499.

## No. 387

3610/E026892-93

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, June 19, 1936.

Pol. I 657.

The French Ambassador, who dined with me last night, explained at length and in terms similar to those which he employed a few days ago in conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister,<sup>1</sup> that the Blum Government were fully prepared to talk to Germany, but first the questionnaire stage between the British and the German Governments must be brought to some sort of conclusion. It emerged fairly clearly from the Ambassador's remarks that the French Government have reconciled themselves to the situation in the Rhineland (nor did M. François-Poncet say anything about the fortifications question), but that the French side would insist on having the question of the security of their Eastern allies settled. M. François-Poncet repeated, though apparently without any inner conviction, the phrases about the indivisibility of peace and said that everything depended on finding a synthesis that would create a new Locarno in the West and, in the East, guarantee the security of Czechoslovakia, etc. It emerged from the Ambassador's remarks that the idea of the need for "compensation" for the French loss of security as a result of the German occupation of the Rhineland still exists, and that this compensation is thought to lie in as binding as possible a commitment of Germany in the East. I countered the Ambassador's remarks by making the self-evident objections, and in particular explained in detail the differences between the situation in the West and the situation in the East, and pointed out that Germany's return to the League of Nations would, to a certain extent, accord with the French security *desiderata* in the East.

M. François-Poncet then went on to speak of the German rearmament and stressed how much anxiety it was causing Germany's neighbours

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<sup>1</sup> No record of this has been found.



and how unjustified it was to rearm to that level, since neither the French nor the Czechs nor the Russians had any intentions of attacking Germany, and he added that in particular the constantly reiterated German allegations about the provision of Czechoslovak airfields for the Russian Air Force were entirely unfounded. I said that our rearmament was of a purely defensive nature but that its dimensions were conditioned by the dangers which were becoming apparent and I criticized the Franco-Russian and the Czechoslovak-Russian pact policy, which, according to reports coming in within the last few days, was now apparently to be extended by means of a pact between Rumania and the Soviet Union.<sup>2</sup> It struck me that M. François-Poncet did not deny the news about the impending conclusion of a Russo-Rumanian pact, but merely confined himself to stating that a pact of this kind would contain no military agreements.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 374 and 380

## No. 388

621/250272-74

### *Ambassador Welczeck to Foreign Minister Neurath*

PARIS, June 19, 1936.

Pol. II 621.

DEAR BARON NEURATH: Now that it is over seven weeks since I presented my credentials,<sup>1</sup> I venture to take this means of informing you of my reception and of the frame of mind which I have found here. As I am reliably informed, both the circles associated with the Government and those of the Right-wing have issued the *mot d'ordre* that I should be received in a friendly fashion and that I personally should not be made to feel the bitterness left by our action.<sup>2</sup> In spite of the cloud over official relations I have been received here with greater attention, indeed with greater friendliness, than was accorded to me by Hungary, who was friendly with Germany, when I took up my post in Budapest in January 1923, and by the Spaniards in the spring of 1926. Apparently the French are attaching importance to making a favourable impression on me and to affording me opportunities from the very beginning of speaking to as many influential personages as possible, former Cabinet Ministers, politicians who are closely associated with the present Government, economists, financiers, etc. I need hardly

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<sup>1</sup> Johannes Count von Welczeck, who was appointed Ambassador to France in succession to Roland Köster after the latter's death on Dec. 31, 1935, presented his credentials on Apr. 30, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the occupation of the Rhineland on Mar. 7, 1936.

say that I have accepted only a selection of the invitations of the "Faubourg", and only for small gatherings.

I have also already met members of the new Blum Cabinet<sup>3</sup>, various Ministers having called upon me by previous arrangement which, incidentally, is not general practice here.

I have gained the impression from all my conversations that German-French relations are still everywhere regarded here as the central problem of French foreign policy; their course is remarked with concern but a solution is seriously being sought. It is true that the solution is envisaged differently in different circles. The most cordial sympathy for Germany and the most ardent advocates of a *rapprochement* between the two countries are to be found precisely in those circles which at present have no share in responsibility for policy. Still, I have the impression that the Government are not seeking a radical and unambiguously anti-German solution. Friends of Minister President Léon Blum have told me that he too, in spite of all doctrinal and domestic impediments, would like a *rapprochement* with us.

We must not, however, expect any immediate shift in French policy over the basic questions. The Popular Front Government must endeavour to provide no fresh support for the opinion often heard here that after our recent experiences we thought that we could do what we liked with the French. Moreover, a Government which is obliged to depend on the political support of the Communists cannot at the very outset of its career seriously undermine the concept of collective security, which the parties of the Left also obstinately maintain. Thus for the time being at least we shall have to expect a continuation of the previous policy.

On no account will France take an important step *vis-à-vis* Germany without Britain. Indicative of the present Franco-British cooperation is the fact that the speech which Eden recently made in the House of Commons<sup>4</sup> was communicated to the French Government beforehand and approved by them. Here too it is expected that Britain will continue to insist on the questionnaire's being answered.<sup>5</sup> In circles where a *rapprochement* with Germany is advocated I have also often heard it said that the shortcomings of a quick and concise answer, dodging the questions which would commit us unilaterally, would attract less notice or be more quickly forgotten in the confusion of the French Government crisis here than would one given in an *exposé* appearing later, from which naturally more would be expected.

That Government circles are disposed to restore a more conciliatory

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 315, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> The reference appears to be to Eden's speech of June 18, see *Parl. Deb. H. of C.* Vol. 313, cols 1197-1211.

<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 313 (enclosure), 317 and 326.

atmosphere by cooperating over individual questions of secondary importance seems to me to be shown by the fact that permission for the Zeppelin to fly over France has after all been granted, in accordance with our most recent modified requests. The banning of the play *Hitler* may also be taken as a concession. M. Léger told me that this was the first decision of this kind for ten years and that it had constituted a not inconsiderable burden for the Government from the point of view of domestic policy too.

The debate on foreign policy in Chamber and Senate, which may be expected on about Tuesday of next week, will certainly make the foreign policy of the Blum Government clearer.

I wanted to send you by today's courier just a description of the atmosphere, a subject more suitable for a private letter than for an official report.

Unfortunately I was also prevented during Whitsun week from being received by the Führer. The day fixed for my first audience coincided with the presentation of my credentials to the President of the Republic, whilst on the second day arranged for me, on Tuesday before last, the new Foreign Minister Delbos, announced that he would call on me.

With the German greeting, Heil Hitler, I remain, dear Baron Neurath,

Yours very sincerely,

H. WELCZECK

## No. 389

8678/E607219-22

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

#### MINUTE ON THE CONVERSATION WITH THE FEDERAL CHANCELLOR ON JUNE 19, 1936.

The Federal Chancellor gave me a draft of an agreement between Austria and the Reich, which substantially corresponds with the text of Berger's counter-draft of October, 1935,<sup>2</sup> but which is more positive

<sup>1</sup> It is evident from Papen's telegram No. 76 of June 19 (1744/402791) briefly reporting this conversation that he is the author of the document here printed.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 319, enclosure; the only differences between it and the draft communicated by Schuschnigg (8678/E607223-26) lie in the addition to the end of Article III(a) of: "The Austrian Federal Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Austria of the following newspapers published in Germany: . . . The German Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Germany of the following newspapers published in Austria: . . ."; the addition to the end of Article III(b) of: "In this connection the idea that both countries belong within the German cultural orbit shall be decisive"; and the revision of Article III(d) to read: "*National Insignia and National Anthems.* Each of the two Governments declare that within the scope of existing laws they will place the nationals of the other party on an equal footing with nationals of third States in regard to the display of the national insignia of their country. The singing of the national anthems shall be permitted to nationals of the other party at closed meetings attended by these nationals exclusively."



in its second part in respect of questions relating to the press, flags, etc. He stressed that he was proposing this or a similar draft for acceptance and subsequent publication by both Governments. In addition he wished to give me a draft for a gentlemen [*sic*] agreement between both Governments, which was to be treated as strictly confidential and was not intended for publication. The Federal Chancellor then read out to me this second draft. It contains:

Commitments by the Reich in respect of the restoration of normal trading relations (no discrimination), settlement of local frontier and tourist traffic, promises by the Federal Chancellor in respect of an immediate comprehensive amnesty for National Socialists, and further, the promise to take into the Government one or more men in whom he has confidence for the purpose of achieving a programme of internal pacification.

I told the Federal Chancellor that I must object to the legal terminology of Berger's draft. The Reich could no more recognize a régime in Austria than Austria could recognize a régime in the Reich.

The main question was assuring the full sovereignty already existing in international law; systems of Government were merely a derivation of this sovereignty.

It was also clear to me that if we were seeking for a formula about the legal relationship of Austria to the Reich, we must also speak quite openly about the restoration question. Although it was perhaps possible to regard the restoration question as a matter of Austrian internal politics, nevertheless it was of decisive importance to the Reich to know what were the Austrian Government's intentions in this question. There could be no doubt that a restoration accomplished under Franco-Italian influence must inevitably encounter the greatest opposition from the Reich, for one reason on account of the German question and further because a restoration undertaken under such aspects would fundamentally change the Central European picture in a sense contrary to the interests of the Reich. I therefore took the view that we must speak quite openly about this question.

The Federal Chancellor acknowledged my wish and went on to say that in principle he would never give up a restoration. But he could not imagine restoration brought about against Germany. Therefore viewed from the aspect of the present Austro-German relationship he considered a restoration to be impossible. Were it to come it would only be brought about by legal methods, that is to say, through a comprehensive plebiscite. On my questioning him about the strong Legitimist propaganda tolerated by the Government, he replied by pointing out that this propaganda was tolerated and supported by the Government as a *riposte* to the activities of the Little Entente.

When I suggested that our agreements ought also to contain some kind of clause about the restoration question, perhaps, e.g., it might be agreed



that Austria would proceed to no change in the form of her State without consulting the Reich, the Chancellor agreed and thought such a declaration would be possible.

After further discussion I told the Chancellor that it seemed most expedient to me that the document destined for publication should contain merely two or three paragraphs about the legal relationship of Austria to the Reich. Everything else would be better incorporated in the gentlemen [*sic*] agreement, that is to say, also the questions to be dealt with in the first document about the press, cultural relations and so on. The Federal Chancellor agreed. I said further that the most important part of the gentlemen [*sic*] agreement would be the programme he would draw up with the man in whom he had confidence for settling internal Austrian affairs. I could not and did not wish to intervene in such matters but would be very glad to help in an advisory capacity. The most important thing was for the Führer and Chancellor to see in this programme, which would also contain [provision] for the National Opposition to take part in shaping the political will, a road to peace and that he should use his influence in this sense with the National circles as far as he was able.

It was agreed as *modus procedendi* that I should now go to see the Führer and ascertain whether there was agreement that:

(a) a document should be drawn up for publication [and]

(b) a gentlemen [*sic*] agreement concerning the remaining points.

If there were a general agreement with possible counter-proposals concerning the contents, then, after a further conversation in Vienna, Herr von Glaise-Horstenau as enjoying the Chancellor's confidence, would accompany me to a second discussion with the Führer and Chancellor.

The proposal for the gentlemen [*sic*] agreement is to be given to me tomorrow.<sup>3</sup>

The Federal Chancellor hoped that we might have arranged the whole matter by mid-July at latest.

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 395.

## No. 390

8062/E579184

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 98 of June 20

ROME, June 20, 1936—3:20 p.m.

Received June 20—5:05 p.m.

Pol. I 616.

With reference to my telegram No. 96 of [June] 16 [*sic*].<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 381.

Bastianini did not mention the matter of recognition during his today's visit, which was purely formal in character. Recognition by us will therefore probably not be for consideration at present. But when it has been decided, in principle, that we propose to accord recognition at a given date, I would suggest that you should already at this stage authorize me to convey a positive reply to Ciano's question as to whether Italy could count on a benevolent attitude on the part of Germany as soon as the question becomes acute; this reply would be best conveyed to Mussolini personally. If this is not done, and if our recognition should coincide with that of other States or even be accorded later, there is a danger that it will not produce the hoped-for effect.<sup>2</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "To be resubmitted. v. N[eurath]." (ii) "For the next interview with the Reich Chancellor. Ko[tze], June 22." (iii) In Neurath's handwriting: "I authorize you to convey to Mussolini personally a positive reply to the question as to whether Italy could count on a benevolent attitude on the part of Germany as soon as the recognition question became acute." Instructions to this effect with the addition of the words "if possible even before the meeting of the Geneva Assembly" were sent to Hassell in telegram No. 136 of June 26 (8062/E579189).

## No. 391

1427/363007-08

### *The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in Belgium*

Telegram

No. 71

BERLIN, June 20, 1936.  
Pol. II 506.

With reference to your telephone conversation with Renthe-Fink.<sup>1</sup>

If, when you see Langenhove<sup>2</sup> the conversation should turn to the British questionnaire,<sup>3</sup> you should stress that we have no intention whatever of delaying our reply to the questionnaire for tactical reasons or of treating the construction of a European peace system in a dilatory fashion. But quite apart from the fact that it really is presumptuous to begin by demanding from us before the whole world assurances as to our future good behaviour, our replying to the questionnaire is made much more difficult in that it also demands that we furnish information on and commit ourselves in advance over a number of far-reaching problems at a moment when the political situation as a whole and the future attitude of the other major Powers

<sup>1</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary General of the Belgian Foreign Ministry.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

remain completely unclarified. This applies particularly to Britain, who only a few days ago managed to come round to a change in the sanctions question, though at the same time discussion of the more comprehensive problem of safeguarding peace on an international basis within the framework of the League of Nations has been postponed until the autumn session of the Assembly. As regards France, the formation of a new Cabinet, which has meanwhile taken place, has not yet led to any clarification of the future course in foreign policy, as the new French Government are, for the time being, completely taken up with the domestic problem. The demand that in such circumstances we should make a binding statement on future solutions therefore appears unreasonable as long as the other side propose to retain for themselves complete freedom of judgement and, in consequence, of action. In all this only one thing has become clear, namely, that the method now adopted by Britain of cross-examination has, particularly in view of the additional fact of the publication of the questionnaire, proved to be a mistake, and not to have furthered the solution of the difficult political situation.

In these circumstances we hope that Belgium, in pursuance of the attitude which she had already adopted during the recent session of the Council in London,<sup>4</sup> an attitude which has been fully justified by subsequent events, will not be prepared to prove herself accessible to any attempts to create a front among the remaining Locarno Powers unilaterally directed against Germany and thus a hindrance to the true pacification of Europe.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 157.

## No. 392

635/253112-22

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, June 20, 1936.

Pol. V 959.

The enclosed memorandum, compiled in the Foreign Ministry, on the militaro-political repercussions of the Franco-Soviet and Czechoslovak-Soviet pacts of mutual assistance in Czechoslovakia and in Rumania is transmitted for your confidential information and for guidance on language to be held.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the principal diplomatic Missions, the Consulates General at Montreal and Sydney and the Consulate at Geneva.

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, June 17, 1936.

MEMORANDUM ON THE MILITARO-POLITICAL REPERCUSSIONS  
OF THE FRANCO-SOVIET AND CZECHOSLOVAK-SOVIET PACTS  
OF MUTUAL ASSISTANCE IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA AND IN RUMANIA

Now that a year has passed since the conclusion of the Mutual Assistance Pacts between the Soviet Union and France (May 2, 1935)<sup>2</sup> and the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia (May 16, 1935),<sup>3</sup> it has become possible to give a reasonably accurate estimate, based on reliable information, of the militaro-political repercussions of these pacts as they concern Czechoslovakia and Rumania.

Where *Czechoslovakia* is concerned, it is entirely consistent with the meaning of this pact of mutual assistance being the encirclement of Germany, that definite agreements have been made between the General Staffs in Prague and Moscow concerning collaboration between the two armies in the event of war. It has not yet proved possible to ascertain details of the terms of these agreements—at least as far as the armies are concerned. It looks, however, as if the agreements have not yet been set down in writing in treaty form. At any rate, according to confidential information, the Czechoslovak Government are supposed, as late as March of this year, to have evaded suggestions to this effect by the Soviet Government.<sup>4</sup>

More precise information is, however, available concerning the collaboration between the two air forces. Following upon the visit to Czechoslovakia in the summer of 1934 (thus, before the conclusion of the Soviet-Czechoslovak Pact) of a delegation from the Soviet Air Force, there was signed in Moscow on May 16, 1935, a Soviet-Czechoslovak agreement concerning the introduction of a regular air service between Moscow and Prague. The route agreed upon at the subsequent negotiations goes from Moscow via Briansk-Kiev-Vinnitsa to the Soviet-Rumanian frontier which it crosses between Mogilev (on the Dniester) and Yampol. Over Rumanian territory the route goes via Jassy-Cluj (Klausenburg) then, following the crest of the Carpathians, via Užhorod, the first Czechoslovak stage, to Bratislava and from there via Brno to

<sup>2</sup> For the text of the Treaty of Mutual Assistance, and Protocol of Signature, between France and the Soviet Union, signed in Paris on May 2, 1935, and ratified on Mar. 27, 1936, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXVII, pp. 395-406.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the Czechoslovak-Russian Pact of Mutual Assistance, signed in Prague on May 16, 1935, and ratifications exchanged on June 9 in Moscow during a visit by Beneš, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLIX, pp. 347-361.

<sup>4</sup> Neither the Foreign Ministry draft, which might bear references to the sources used, nor the confidential reports here cited have been found. The passages concerning Rumania appear to be partly based on a report by Col. Tschunke dated May 11 (5888/E431792-96).



Prague. The way this air route runs in itself shows its primarily military and strategic character; owing to its proximity to the Polish frontier, the shortest and most convenient route via Cernăuți was purposely not chosen, but instead the route was made to go via Jassy and Cluj (Klausenburg) and thus (in spite of technical aviation difficulties and unfavourable meteorological conditions) over the Carpathians. Moreover, the choice of the strongly fortified bridgehead of Mogilev-Yampol as Soviet frontier stage, and the fact that the Soviet pilots chosen for this stretch are Air Force pilots (disguised as civilians) both go to show the military importance of this air route.

In June 1935 a Czechoslovak military delegation, led by the Chief of the Air Force, General Faifr, flew to Kiev and Moscow. In July 1935 the Soviet Government in their turn sent out a military commission, which was led by the Commandant of the Military Academy, Shaposhnikov, and which included amongst others the Inspector General of Artillery of the Red Army and the Commander of the Moscow Bomber Squadron, to attend manœuvres in Czechoslovakia. In return for this visit officers of the Czechoslovak Army accepted an invitation in September 1935 from the leaders of the Soviet Army to attend the large-scale manœuvres in the neighbourhood of Kiev.

There is reason to believe that this active exchange of visits has not only been made the occasion for general discussions on combined military operations by both armies in the event of war, but has already led to concrete decisions with regard to the collaboration of the Air Forces of the two countries and the organization of the preparatory measures already necessary to this end in peace time. This is primarily a matter of deciding what airfields in Czechoslovakia (a country which is destined to serve as a base for air attacks on Germany by Soviet air squadrons and has thus with justification been described as "the aircraft carrier of the Soviet Union") will be necessary as operational airfields for Soviet Air Force units and carrying out their expansion. This work was begun jointly by Soviet Russian and Czechoslovak officers in the summer of 1935.

In spite of repeated official statements<sup>5</sup> by the Czechoslovak Government, in which any form of practical cooperation with the Soviet Union in air matters has been categorically denied, reliable reports state that already at the beginning of this year thirty-two airfields in Czechoslovak territory had been envisaged as operational airfields for Soviet Air Force formations. The more important of these airfields near the Polish and German frontiers are equipped with runway defences and bomb storage depots. Petrol is continuously kept stored in bullet-proof tanks at the Soviet Government's expense. It is further known that the Czechoslovak armament industry is making prepara-

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<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 205 and 220, and vol. iv of this Series, document No. 580.

tions to ensure that the war material requirements (bombs, etc.) of the Soviet air fleet seconded to Czechoslovakia are met.

The focal point of joint Czechoslovak-Soviet collaboration is at the moment in Slovakia, and especially in the Bratislava area. In this area new airfields have been completed at Zlatno, Aranyos-Marot and Zolom; work is still in progress on two more in the Szalatna valley. A new airfield has been built at Huszt in Carpatho-Russia. Airfields have also been built in Moravia and elsewhere, thus at Sz. Benedel, Tabor, Mährisch-Trübau, Mährisch-Kromau and Strakoniz. Underground works have also been constructed at the last two airfields. Officers of the Red Air Force play a decisive rôle in the direction of these installations. Apparently Soviet officers and technical personnel are also acting as instructors in the training of Czechoslovak flying personnel and ground staff [*Fliegertruppe*], principally in the Bratislava area. The total number of Soviet officers at present active in Czechoslovakia is estimated at thirty. There is no reliable information available as to the numbers of Red Air Force other ranks at present stationed in Czechoslovakia. They are said already to have reached a strength of two hundred. Of late Czechoslovak flying personnel are said to have been on training courses in the Soviet Union.

Apart from the Soviet officers in charge of the construction of airfields in Moravia and Bohemia, no Soviet Air Force technical personnel appear to have been seconded so far. On the other hand it has been established that there are Red Army instructors for the Czechoslovak paratroop units in this area.

The general control of the Soviet military organization in Czechoslovakia is in the hands of General Sopornikov, who, whilst his official headquarters are in Moscow, frequently travels to Prague. His permanent deputy is Colonel Suritzky, whose offices are in the Czechoslovak War Ministry. In any case the Soviet Military Mission works directly with the Czechoslovak military authorities, cutting out the diplomatic authorities. The Czechoslovak representative for this purpose is the Chief of the Air Force, General Faifr, who also functions as chairman of a mixed Czechoslovak-Soviet Commission.

Ostensibly independent of this camouflaged collaboration, there exists in the Soviet Legation in Prague a department for civil aviation under Captain Guaiter who is supposed to be concerned with all negotiations concerning air traffic as far as it affects the Little Entente States.

The efficacy of the Soviet Union's military aid to Czechoslovakia depends to a decisive extent on *Rumania's* attitude. It must be the concern of France, the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, as the Powers chiefly interested in the military encirclement of Germany, to include Rumania as far as possible in their alliance system or at least to secure her agreement to the passage through her territory of Soviet military

forces. Efforts in this direction were begun, through French agency, shortly after the conclusion of the so-called Russian Pact in May 1935 and were favourably received on the Rumanian side by Foreign Minister Titulescu. The King of Rumania and authoritative Rumanian Army circles, however, at first opposed closer ties to the Soviet Union, particularly military agreements. Apart from dynastic considerations, this unfavourable attitude was probably dictated in the first place by the fact that the Soviet Union has so far not expressly renounced Bessarabia.

At the beginning of 1936, however, Titulescu succeeded, with the support of the French and Czechoslovak Governments, in moderating the King's attitude during his stay in Paris (after the funeral of the King of England). The restoration of Germany's military sovereignty in the Rhineland and his consequent conviction of the diminished value of the Rumanian-French alliance, then appear to have led to King Carol's final conversion, since he believed that he could no longer do without Soviet Russian support. In any case, according to reliable information, the possibility must be reckoned with that the Rumanian Government too will now very shortly conclude a military assistance pact with the Soviet Union. Independently of this it can already be taken as proved that General Staff arrangements have been concluded under which the fly-over rights for Soviet aircraft and the transport through the country of Soviet war materials are secured. There are also said to have been discussions regarding the passage of Soviet troops, though obviously in this respect King Carol finds it difficult to overcome his understandable reluctance.

The actual negotiations were, as has already been stated, conducted through the agency of the French General Staff. It would appear as though the French military delegation which spent some time in Bucharest in February of this year<sup>6</sup> had already at that time initiated the discussions.

In view of the fact that they have so far abstained from direct Soviet-Rumanian military negotiations, the Rumanian Government have felt themselves able, in numerous official statements, flatly to deny any Soviet-Rumanian military collaboration, and in particular to state that any idea of granting the Red Army the right of military passage is completely erroneous. But on the other hand, for example, on March 5, 1936, the French Senator Yves le Trocquer, in his capacity of *rapporteur* for the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee, rightly stated in his report on the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance<sup>7</sup> that a similar pact was also in course of preparation between Rumania and

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 131 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> For the text see *Journal Officiel de la République Française, Débats Parlementaires, Sénat, 1936, Annexe au procès-verbal de la séance du 5 Mars 1936*. See also document No. 142 and footnotes 4 and 5 thereto.



the Soviet Union, and that it would mean the grant of the right of military passage to the Red Army.

As far as is known at present, the Rumanian General Staff—apart from the study of general operational plans for Rumanian-Soviet military cooperation carried out under cover of the League of Nations obligations arising under Article 16 of the Geneva Statute—have made technical preparations primarily in the field of transport. This applies both to the precise definition and to the technical improvement of the routes which would be placed at the disposal of the Soviet High Command in the event of war. It is evident that they proceeded from the assumption that the few direct railway lines from the Soviet to the Czechoslovak frontier would not by themselves suffice for the purposes of the Red Army but that a large proportion of the transports would probably have to be routed through Hungarian territory or at any rate along the Hungarian frontier.

In particular, the following railway lines were envisaged for Soviet transports and their improvement for military purposes put in hand:

1) Tighina — Jassy — Dorna Vatra — Bistrița — Dej — Szatmár — Halmy.

On this, the most important line, the main concern at present is the speeding up of the improvement of the line between Dorna Vatra and Bistrița.

2) Tighina — Jassy — Roman — Adjud — Maros Vasárhely — Cluj (Klausenburg)—Oradea (Gross-Wardein)—Careil Mari.

3) Celatea Alba (Akkerman)—Besarabeasku—Marasesti—Maros Vasárhely—Dej—Szatmár—Halmy.

On each of the above three routes it is intended that six transports per day shall run in an emergency.

The shortest railway route, namely that through the Bukovina, is, in view of the proximity of the Polish frontier, apparently not envisaged for Soviet transports.

Apart from the railways, the waterway up to Galatz is to be made navigable for the purposes of the Soviet Army. From there the transports would be routed via Adjud.

In Cluj (Klausenburg) base camps are to be set up. The central position of this town makes it possible to send transports up to the Hungarian or Czechoslovak frontiers as required.

In conclusion the following may be said: In spite of the numerous official *démentis* by the Governments concerned, there are, both in Czechoslovakia and in Rumania, widespread strategic preparations in progress, in collaboration with the Soviet High Command, for the event of war. The meaning of the Russian pacts, which is in any case obvious as being military alliances against Germany, which have already completely shifted the balance in Europe, is hereby most clearly underlined. The possibility that the military arrangements have not so far been set down in writing in treaty form cannot alter this fact.



## No. 393

3254/E000778-83

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain*

Cipher letter

(By air)

MOST URGENT

BERLIN, June 20, 1936.

Sent June 21.

e.o. Pol. IV 825.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor of Legation Altenburg.

I. Rumours have of late been increasing abroad, particularly in the French press, regarding preparations for a Habsburg restoration in Austria.<sup>1</sup> These rumours are supported by certain events in the country itself. Thus, a sister of Archduke Otto, Archduchess Adelheid, recently took up residence in Vienna, an event which Legitimist circles in the country have since, by means of various functions [*durch verschiedene Veranstaltungen*], exploited to the utmost for propaganda purposes. Furthermore, a brother of Otto, Archduke Robert, has recently approached the Austrian military authorities and asked to be allowed to do his military service in Austria. In this event there would be a second immediate member of the family of the claimant to the throne who had returned to Austria. In this connection a letter of Otto's to a Tyrol commune which recently presented him with the freedom of the commune is of interest. This letter contains the passage "It is high time that decisive action were taken. I am ready to return to the homeland at any time". Finally, on June 16, the *Reichspost* had an article on the restoration question headed: "We merely note the facts", and saying amongst other things: "Amongst many sections of Austrians there is a growing inclination towards a monarchical system of government in the expectation that this will lead to a permanent stability in internal conditions. It is natural that these desires for a restoration of the princely powers should centre upon the legitimate heirs of the hereditary archducal house. Austria has no international obligation to prevent her choosing her form of government at her own free discretion, nor any forbidding her, should she decide to set up a monarchy, from calling upon the heirs of the House of Habsburg-Lorraine to wear the crown."

<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum, Pol. IV 553 of June 8 (3254/E000772), Altenburg recorded information received in the War Ministry from the former Austrian Minister in Munich Denk about the possibility of a Habsburg restoration. In a memorandum, Pol. IV 704 of June 8 (3254/E000775), Dieckhoff recorded that he had informed the Yugoslav Minister that Germany was watching the situation and could not see at the moment any cause for anxiety.

These statements in the Austrian Federal Government's official organ have caused us to abandon the reserve we have hitherto maintained on the Habsburg question and to make known our attitude with regard to these rumours in a statement entitled "Plain Speaking" in the *Deutsche-diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz*, No. 130 of June 17,<sup>2</sup> with which I may presume you are already familiar. The restoration question will in fact continue to merit the greatest attention when it is considered that nearly all the important posts in the Austrian Government are occupied by Legitimists and that since the beginning of this year propaganda for the return of the Habsburgs has, with the indulgence of the Government authorities in the country, been more active than ever.

For your personal information only, I would add that negotiations are at present in progress between the Federal Chancellor and members of the National Opposition<sup>3</sup> with a view to clearing up the internal political differences in Austria, and that, in view of the repercussions which the re-establishment of domestic peace in that country must have on the relations between the Reich and Austria, these negotiations are being furthered by us as much as possible. In this connection, conversations have therefore also taken place between our Minister in Vienna and the Austrian Federal Chancellor.<sup>4</sup> Should these efforts at reconciliation not be successful, then one must expect that the restoration question will become still more acute.<sup>5</sup>

II. When calling at the Foreign Office on some other matter, you should, without giving the conversation the appearance of a *démarche*, make use of the foregoing arguments and give expression to the anxiety with which we, as neighbours, are following the turn which the restoration question has recently taken in Austria. There is a danger, which cannot be dismissed, that—quite apart from the possibility of internal political disorders—a *fait accompli* in this question might impel States such as those of the Little Entente (whose territorial integrity would be directly threatened by Habsburg aspirations to power in the event of a restoration) to take decisions of which the consequences would be incalculable, and which would subject the situation in Central Europe to the severest convulsions. Should these arguments be countered by the remark that the Reich, by its previous policy towards Austria, was itself to blame for these developments, you could reply by indicating that at the present time, as the British Foreign Office may be aware, negotiations with a view to reconciling the political differences in the country, are in progress between the Austrian Federal Chancellor and

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 351, 357, 369, with footnote 1 thereto, and 371.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 389.

<sup>5</sup> In despatch A 3281 of June 17 (3254/E000784-91) Papen reported upon the political situation in Austria and the prospects of a restoration, offering his own suggestions for countering the latter possibility.

the National Opposition, and that, in view of the importance which a successful outcome of these negotiations would have for the improvement of relations between the Reich and Austria, we are endeavouring to further these negotiations without exposing ourselves to the charge of interference in internal political affairs.<sup>6</sup>

By order:  
DIECKHOFF<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Copies of the despatch here printed were sent to the Missions in Rome and Vienna for information; the despatch to Rome added: "I should be grateful for a report as to whether the above-mentioned leading article in the *Reichspost* of June 16 actually evoked such an echo in Italian political circles as appeared to be the case according to a report of the Rome correspondent of the *Reichspost* of June 18. Further, I would venture to leave it to your discretion to take a suitable opportunity of drawing attention in an authoritative Italian quarter to our anxiety regarding the consequences of an arbitrary step by the Federal Government in the matter of a restoration." For Hassell's reply see document No. 404.

<sup>7</sup> In despatch A 2544 of June 26 (3254/E000796) Bismarck reported a conversation with Sargent, an Assistant Under Secretary of State, in the Foreign Office in which he expressed German anxieties as instructed.

## No. 394

147/78408

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, June 20, 1936.

RM 508.

I asked the Polish Ambassador to call on me today and discussed the events in Danzig with him.<sup>1</sup> M. Lipski already had a complaint about the maltreatment of Polish nationals in his pocket; however, after our conversation he did not present it. I asked M. Lipski to use his influence in Warsaw so that the events in Danzig were not exaggerated and so that, in particular, possible requests by the League of Nations High Commissioner to make use of Polish police in Danzig were not complied with. In addition I gave M. Lipski the memoranda given me by Gauleiter Forster<sup>2</sup> about statements made by the Polish pastor who had been called in for the funeral of the SS members. Finally I asked the Ambassador to get Warsaw to use their influence with the High Commissioner to prevent the possibility of his raising Danzig questions at the next session in Geneva. M. Lipski promised to make representations forthwith in Warsaw in this sense.

V. NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 373, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Neither these memoranda nor any record of Forster transmitting them to Neurath have been found.

## No. 395

8678/E607229-30

*The Austrian Federal Chancellor to the Minister in Austria*

VIENNA, June 20, 1936.

YOUR EXCELLENCY: With reference to our conversation of June 19<sup>1</sup> I venture to enclose a confidential draft regarding the oral statements.

I should at the same time like to repeat once again that I attach the greatest importance to the strictest and most absolute discretion, as agreed by us yesterday.

Awaiting Your Excellency's further kind information, I remain, with the assurance of my highest esteem.

Yours etc.,

SCHUSCHNIGG

[Enclosure]

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL ORAL STATEMENT

*The Representative of the German Reich* states:

(1) The German Government are prepared, putting aside all political considerations, to open the way for normal economic relations between the German Reich and Austria. This readiness extends also to the [re-establishment of] local frontier traffic [*der kleine Grenzverkehr*], in particular, however, to the purchase of timber and cattle and also in respect of local frontier traffic in areas previously intentionally excluded from such traffic (e.g. the Mühl district). Regarding tourist traffic, the restrictions preventing members of the German-Austrian Alpine Association from visiting the huts belonging to the Reich German sections shall be abolished forthwith.

(2) All restrictions on mutual artistic exchanges shall be abolished; the same applies to the sale of works by authors of either country in the territory of the other country, insofar as these works are in conformity with the laws of the country of importation.

The *Federal Chancellor* states that the coming into being of the *modus vivendi* under discussion, would result in his being prepared:

(1) To grant a far-reaching political amnesty from which persons who have committed serious offences in criminal law shall be excluded;

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 389.



(2) So to conduct the foreign policy of the Austrian Federal Government as to take into account the peaceful endeavours of the Reich German Government's foreign policy. The Rome protocols of 1934 and the Supplementary Protocols of 1936,<sup>2</sup> as well as the position of Austria with regard to Italy and Hungary as parties to these Protocols, shall not be affected thereby;

(3) For the purpose of promoting a real pacification, to bring in, at an appropriate moment, to be envisaged for the near future, representatives of the hitherto so-called National Opposition in Austria to share in political responsibility; they shall be personalities enjoying the personal confidence of the Federal Chancellor, whose selection he reserves to himself.

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

## No. 396

1650/391899-900

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

1457 I A 34

BUCHAREST, June 20, 1936.

Received June 23.

Pol. IV 941/1000.

Subject: Conversation with Titulescu.

With reference to my telegram No. 75 of June 19.<sup>1</sup>

I should like to add the following to my telegram under reference concerning the conversation with M. Titulescu.

Titulescu was induced by Krofta's statements to Eisenlohr<sup>2</sup> to admit for the first time that he had spoken to the Russians about the conclusion of a pact. He would like to make out that this happened casually over a cup of coffee when he foregathered with Litvinov at Geneva. He stubbornly denies that he himself wanted a pact on the model of the Czechoslovak-Russian treaty which, he admitted, to have been clearly directed against Germany. He would like however—and this he freely admitted—a frontier guarantee and non-aggression pact with *assistance mutuelle* operative against all, which would in itself presumably come to the same thing, but without being directed against Germany. But evidently Soviet Russia does not desire this form of pact since it would involve recognition of the Bessarabian frontier. This evidently means that the pact question is in abeyance.

Whether there is any truth in Titulescu's assertion that he is not at present negotiating with the Russians about a pact I should not like to

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 385.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 374.

say. He is so often in the company of the Russian Minister, M. Ostrovsky, that it may be assumed that something or other is in fact being discussed.

The new Yugoslav Minister, Kassidolac, who has just returned from Belgrade, told me, however, that Stojadinović, with whom he had discussed at length every detail of the Bucharest meeting,<sup>3</sup> had said nothing about discussions regarding the possible conclusion of a Rumano-Russian pact. Since this question was, however, not without importance for Yugoslavia, he hardly thought that M. Stojadinović would have forgotten to mention it had it actually been discussed.

FABRICIUS

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<sup>3</sup> See document No. 374, footnote 2.

[EDITORS' NOTE. The Montreux Conference met from June 22 to July 20, 1936, to discuss the Turkish proposals for a revision of the Straits Convention signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923 (see document No. 277). The conference was attended by representatives of all Powers, other than Italy, signatories of the Straits Convention and Lausanne Treaty of 1923 and with the addition of Yugoslavia. It resulted in the signature on July 20, 1936 of a fresh Convention for the text of which see British White Paper Cmd. 5249: *Turkey No. 1 (1936), Convention regarding the Régime of the Straits with Correspondence relating thereto*. Ratifications of this Convention were deposited in Paris on November 9, 1936, by all signatories other than Japan whose ratification was deposited on April 19, 1937.

Germany was not a party to the Lausanne Treaty and Convention of 1923. A memorandum by Woermann, dated June 20, 1936 (8802/E613601), records that in reply to an official enquiry by the Bulgarian Minister he had informed him that Germany would neither take part in nor be represented by an observer at the Montreux Conference.

A memorandum submitted to Neurath by Pilger of Department III and dated July 7, 1936 (1627/389404-05), reviewing Germany's treaty position and discussing the advisability of applying for some form of representation at the Conference in view of the British proposal to retain the International Straits Commission, concluded that in view of Germany's and Turkey's common interest in freeing themselves from all such bonds, it would not be desirable for Germany to adopt this course.]

## No. 397

1650/391901-03

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 81 of June 23

BUCHAREST, June 23, 1936—10:15 p.m.

Received June 24—2:00 a.m.

Pol. IV 959.

With reference to my [telegram No.] 80 of [June] 22.<sup>1</sup>

King Carol questioned me during my audience today concerning the impressions I had gained during my most recent visit to Berlin. I told him that I had found leading personalities, particularly the Reich Foreign Minister, to be sympathetic towards and interested in good relations with Rumania. In spite of the Rumanian Government's special love of France, they saw no reason why this should necessarily result in any hostility towards Germany. The King replied that he fully shared this view and attached great importance to good relations with Germany, whereupon I raised the objection that Krofta's statement<sup>2</sup> concerning the impending conclusion of a treaty with Russia which would be identical with the Czech-Russian treaty would seriously impair this policy.

The King, in reply, referred to my discussion with Titulescu,<sup>3</sup> of which he was informed, and said that Krofta's statement was incorrect. Rumania would not, and he said this to me as her Sovereign, conclude any treaty directed against Germany or any other country. Rumania's only treaty which referred to a foreign country (Hungary) was the Treaty of the Little Entente.<sup>4</sup> Rumania wished to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance with Soviet Russia, as with all other countries, and he offered such a treaty to Germany too. He did not desire anything more than this, but at the moment negotiations with Soviet Russia were not progressing. Rumania needed such a treaty, however, to safeguard her frontiers.

When I objected once again that Krofta had made the same state-

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1650/391898).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 374.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 385 and 396.

<sup>4</sup> The Conventions of Alliance between Rumania and Czechoslovakia of April 23, 1921, between Rumania and Yugoslavia of June 7, 1921 and between Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia of August 31, 1922, were extended on May 21, 1929 and supplemented by an Act of Conciliation, Arbitration and Judicial Settlement; and subsequently by the Pact of Organization of the Little Entente, signed at Geneva on February 16, 1933 (see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xxxix, pp. 235-239).

ments to others, the King said: "You can rely on my word completely. Why do you wish to believe others more than us?"

He saw no reason, the King continued, why Germany should not understand that a weak Rumania sought the protection of a strong Russia. Germany could quite well come to an understanding with France, as Flandin too had told him. Whether this would also be possible with the Blum Government he could not say, for this Government had moved much further to the Left than he had ever thought possible. Nor had Rumania any divergences with Germany. He must, however, draw attention to just one point: he would no longer in any circumstances tolerate it that Germany, or the Party with which Germany was now identified, should support Rumanian Right-wing parties either financially or otherwise. He had brought these intrigues to the attention of the Führer through Prince Koburg [*sic*: Coburg] to whom he had spoken in London<sup>5</sup> and had taken action against the journalist Weber<sup>6</sup> who had been an agent. He appreciated that we preferred Right-wing to Left-wing parties; but he would regard any support of the former as interference in Rumania's internal affairs.

The King then spoke of the internal struggle between Jewish and anti-Semitic papers which had led to unrest; he would suppress this with all rigour.

The King then asked what was the significance of Schacht's journey, and observed that Schacht had also concerned himself with Rumania whilst in Belgrade; he did not believe that Schacht had spoken in the manner described to him [the King] (cf. despatch 14 . . . (group mutilated) of June 20).<sup>7</sup> I seized the opportunity of explaining our economic differences to the King and when he said that petroleum could only be purchased against foreign exchange, I pointed out the great advantages which Rumania obtained from our deliveries of machinery, which were partly made on a credit basis. The King recognized this and said that he thought we should certainly find some *modus* in the current discussions.<sup>8</sup>

The King evaded my efforts to extract some information from him as to the outcome of the Little Entente Conference in Bucharest and said he believed that Schuschnigg would after all have second thoughts about the restoration of the Habsburgs; with regard to the *Anschluss* question, the King took the view that it would be more to Austria's interest than to ours.

<sup>5</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 531.

<sup>6</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 478 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> Not found; for details of Schacht's journey see document No. 376 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>8</sup> A second supplementary agreement (for the first see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 297 and footnote 1 thereto) to the Payments Agreement of May 24, 1935 (see *ibid.*, document No. 110 and footnote 1 thereto) was signed at Munich on Sept. 24, 1936. For the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, pp. 312-315. A confidential additional protocol has been filmed as 6646/E504618-22.



In the course of conversation on personal matters I expressed my sympathy with him over experiencing the accident at Crajevo.<sup>9</sup>

FABRICIUS

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<sup>9</sup> This would appear to be a reference to the collapse of one of the stands for spectators at the Youth Festival held on June 8 during the meeting of the Little Entente in Bucharest. In despatch 1347 of June 10 (1895/H426572-84) (see document No. 374, footnote 2), Fabricius reported that King Carol had personally supervised the rescue measures.

## No. 398

5642/E410942-44

### *The Embassy in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 101

Del. No. 1

ROME, June 23, 1936.

W III WE 115.

## I

The negotiations have in the main been brought to a conclusion.<sup>1</sup> The Italian Government are prepared to continue to pay for additional deliveries, in a similar way to that agreed in Munich in December,<sup>2</sup> on the basis of special agreements by compensation or by some other method. By contrast to the last agreement, however, additional deliveries are no longer to be fixed in each individual case. On the contrary, the principle of additional deliveries is accepted without more ado, provided the balance exceeds 12 million RM. Compared with the Munich agreements, this means a considerable simplification and facilitation of additional deliveries, which, in the present situation, is in our interest. Moreover, the Italians will not in future again be able to get round the agreements reached, as negotiations on offsetting the balance are to start automatically the moment it exceeds the limit.

With regard to the application of the system of licences, the Italians, although they will not completely meet our wishes, will at least give us guarantees that normal German trade will be maintained, which will be considerably more favourable for us than the arrangement to date. In addition they have promised to grant import permits to replace those for deliveries which were in fact not effected during the last six months.

The old balance, amounting to 26 million RM, is to be offset by additional deliveries of goods desired, primarily raw materials, to the value of 8 million RM, by carrying over a sum of 10 million RM to the

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 352.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this series. Editors' Note, p. 930.

tourism account (of which more than 8 million RM have in any case already been carried over in advance), and by making available 8 million RM for the purpose of transferring the proceeds of the sale of German securities in Italian possession and Italian claims in Germany.

## II

Agreement has been reached on the "above points, except for the provisions concerning the transfer of the proceeds from the securities and the Italian claims. On this last point I have reserved the right to obtain a decision from the German Government. The Italians are not prepared to meet my original request that these transfers be effected at the value abroad and/or at the Sperrmark<sup>3</sup> rate. They began by insisting on transfer at the rate of the free Reichsmark, but have finally agreed to a uniform deduction of 30 per cent for the proceeds of the securities and for the Sperrmark claims, as well as to limiting the transfer of the claims to 2 million RM within the framework of the 8 million RM mentioned above. The Italians are also insisting that we should abandon the procedure of examining each individual transaction and should allocate an overall permit for the total payment. It has proved impossible after protracted negotiation to obtain any further Italian concessions in this respect. I therefore think it would be advisable to agree to the transfer under the conditions set out above, for else it will be impossible to conclude the agreement, which is very favourable for us otherwise, above all in respect of maintaining a favourable balance of foreign exchange and supplies of important raw materials.

As signature is to take place as early as Wednesday evening, or at latest on Thursday, I should be grateful if I could be informed by telephone of your approval by tomorrow Wednesday afternoon.<sup>4</sup>

SARNOW<sup>5</sup>

HASELL

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<sup>3</sup> i.e., a type of blocked marks.

<sup>4</sup> The secret second supplementary agreement and connected exchanges which were signed on Wednesday, June 24, have been filmed as 8988/E630349-73.

<sup>5</sup> Ministerialdirektor in the Reich Ministry of Economics.

## No. 399

1650/391904-05

*The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

1477 I A 34

BUCHAREST, June 24, 1936.

Received June 26.

Pol. IV 1000.

Subject: Conversation with King Carol II.

With reference to my telegram No. 81 of June 23.<sup>1</sup>

I should add in connection with my conversation with King Carol II that the King, when we were speaking of the Blum Government, asked me: "Do you believe, then, that Soviet Russia wants war? Do you believe that Russia is in any case sufficiently armed for war?" I replied that I was unable to answer his second question since I was not a soldier. But it was certain that Soviet Russia was busily arming. I did not know whether Soviet Russia herself would make war; this much was certain however: it was in her interests to create disquiet the world over. That Russia had wished to intervene with particular severity at the outbreak of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, had already been evident. She would probably have preferred it, even at that time, if Britain had fallen upon Italy and general war had broken out in Europe. For Soviet Russia could only fish in troubled waters. However peaceable and "bourgeois" her behaviour might appear in the eyes of many today, Soviet Russia had never abandoned the idea of world revolution and she played the Comintern's game overtly and secretly by turns. That was the danger which threatened the world, and it was for this reason that one could not leave the Rhineland unfortified in the face of a France who appeared to be coming more and more to depend upon Moscow.

The King observed in reply that what I had said about Soviet Russia was quite true.

I added that I only gave credence to the first part of the contention often met with here that France was solidly "bourgeois" and that a reaction against Blum's shift towards the Left would soon make itself felt in France. Such a reaction would not, in my personal opinion, set in either so easily or so rapidly. But one must realize that even a small clique could easily gain control of a big social system. No one would have believed two years ago that the churches in Spain would be destroyed by Bolsheviks. The King listened thoughtfully and said: "Yes, you are quite right."

FABRICIUS

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 397.

## No. 400

1627/389392-93

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1400

TARABYA, June 24, 1936.

Pol. VII 542.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The Straits Conference.

With reference to my today's report A 1398.<sup>1</sup>

The reports, inspired by the delegation in Montreux on the opening of the Conference<sup>2</sup> and on its prospects, which have reached us here so far, radiate boundless optimism, and, if one were to judge purely by this outward show, one would think that the new Straits convention, based on the Turkish proposals, was to be signed very shortly. In actual fact, however, as I mentioned in my earlier reports, it would seem indeed to be the case that the real difficulties are only now becoming apparent. Quite apart from the temporary non-participation of Italy,<sup>3</sup> which it is hoped to overcome in one way or another (although the difficulty on this point is fully realized), divergences on the subject matter itself are becoming apparent. As far as can be ascertained from the incomplete and not very clear reports appearing in the local press, there is a fundamental conflict of interests between Britain and Soviet Russia in respect of the right of passage of warships, with Britain—it may be assumed in agreement with Japan—wishing to prevent or limit the appearance of Russian warships in the Mediterranean and beyond it. Between the two stands Turkey's interest in the safeguarding of the Straits region.

As I am told by a press personality, who is usually well informed, this dispute is a very painful one for the Turks, because they may be forced to adopt a definite attitude in respect of these two viewpoints, but on the other hand do not wish to offend either of the two parties. In view of the many possible political constellations, the decision is in itself already a difficult one for Turkey, but she would be placed in a particularly difficult position if British pressure and her own interest in the protection of the Straits were to force her to choose against Russia.

It would, moreover, appear—and some light is thrown upon this

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7245/E531637); this transmitted the text, published by the Agence Anatolie of the draft for a new Straits Convention submitted in Montreux.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

<sup>3</sup> The Italian Government had refused to participate as long as sanctions were still being applied against Italy.



matter by the emergence of the dispute—that the preliminary consultations between Turkey and Soviet Russia in respect of the project to be presented at Montreux did not go into any great detail.

KELLER

## No. 401

8678/E607231-41

### *Minister Papen to Foreign Minister Neurath*

PERSONAL

[VIENNA], June 24, 1936.

DEAR NEURATH: As I informed you by telegram yesterday,<sup>1</sup> I reported to the Führer at Obersalzberg regarding the most recent conversation between the Federal Chancellor and myself.<sup>2</sup> At this conversation the Federal Chancellor suggested the following *modus procedendi*:

A short communiqué, intended for publication, regarding the conclusion of peace.

A confidential gentlemen [*sic*] agreement between the two Governments regarding the settlement of the points at issue.

In this gentlemen [*sic*] agreement there is, amongst other things, a statement by the Federal Chancellor that he is prepared to bring in members of the National Opposition to share in political responsibility.

Should this *modus procedendi* be approved by the Führer, a further conversation regarding the final texts is proposed, and at the same time a conversation between the Führer and the person who enjoys the Federal Chancellor's confidence regarding the programme of internal pacification agreed between the latter and the Federal Chancellor.

The Federal Chancellor also handed me at the last discussion:

(1) Herr von Berger's counter-draft of October last [*sic*],<sup>3</sup> which, as you know, never came to be made the subject of discussion,

(2) a further confidential document<sup>4</sup> containing the promise of an amnesty, etc.

From these two documents I have composed the attached drafts, namely:

(a) the communiqué intended for publication which should be kept as brief as possible.

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 79 of June 23 (1744/402795) which read as follows: "For the Foreign Minister: The Führer to whom I reported today and who approved all the proposals will inform you personally on Thursday [i.e. June 25], for which reason I have returned here. Tomorrow I am sending you a courier with the documentation. Papen."

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 389.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 319, enclosure; the document handed by Schuschnigg to Papen on June 19 was not, however, identical with Berger's counter draft (cf. document No. 389 and footnote 2 thereto).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 395, enclosure.

(b) the gentlemen [*sic*] agreement in which the questions at issue are dealt with as far as possible.

In order to make matters clearer for you I have underlined in red the passages in the two documents which have received the written or verbal approval of the Federal Chancellor, or which originated with him.<sup>5</sup> The rest consists of additions by me. It therefore remains to be seen how far he will accept these additions at the next discussion.

The Führer gave his full approval to both drafts yesterday.

Concerning the communiqué intended for publication, I have explained, with regard to the passage "recognizes the right to self-determination of its people" that this contains the Reich Government's objection in principle to the curtailment of this right of self-determination resulting from the Treaty of St. Germain and that the passage further constitutes an encouragement for the National Opposition in that it leaves open for them the possibility of a plebiscite. Whether the Federal Chancellor will swallow it, remains to be seen.

With regard to the gentlemen [*sic*] agreement the Führer had two wishes:

(1) On the question of the re-admission of the press he is mainly concerned that German newspapers should be read in Austria. In order to achieve this as widely as possible he wishes that in the newspapers admitted, *criticism* of Austrian internal political conditions should be omitted altogether in order to give no ground for complaint—naturally on condition that there is reciprocity. I have, therefore, already included a statement to this effect in the enclosed drafts.

(2) With regard to the re-establishment of tourist traffic, which envisages an official cancellation of the ban, the influx which otherwise would probably occur is to be prevented by a progressive fixing of quotas. The Führer agreed to this. I imagine that, as the basic figure, something like the figure for tourist traffic existing hitherto, plus a moderate increase, will be agreed with the Reich Ministry of the Interior. This fixing of quotas will also be in Austria's interests.

My next meeting with the Federal Chancellor will be on Friday, as he has gone away for two days. The next and final discussion with the Führer is envisaged for July 6 or 7 at Obersalzberg. If necessary, I could also come to Berlin to discuss questions of detail.

On my reporting that a conclusion of peace with Austria would undoubtedly exert a favourable influence on the political situation as a whole, the Führer made the suggestion that the reply to the British questionnaire should, if need be, coincide with the publication of the German-Austrian communiqué. If this suggestion is put into effect,

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<sup>5</sup> The actual copies of the two enclosures which Papen sent to Neurath have not been found; the underlinings were not duplicated on Papen's file copies (the originals of the enclosures here printed).

publication, according to my calculation, could be envisaged for July 10 or thereabouts.

In conclusion, one more request: The Federal Chancellor has asked me for the strictest discretion regarding the offers made by him. The danger of obstruction from all sides is very great. It might therefore be advisable not to allow the two drafts to go through the regular official channels, in order that nothing may seep through to Austria *via* the Party.

If you should wish any further amendments to the drafts, I should be grateful if I could be informed by midday on Friday.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler,

Yours,

PAPEN

[Enclosure 1]

June 22, 1936.

#### NEW PROPOSAL BY PAPEN<sup>6</sup>

Convinced of valuably contributing to the general progress in Europe toward the maintenance of peace, and

Believing that the manifold reciprocal interests of the two German States might thereby best be served, the Governments of the German Reich and of the Federal State of Austria have decided to restore their relations to normality and friendship.

Therefore the following declaration is made:

I. In accordance with the statements made by the Führer and Chancellor on May 21, 1935, the Government of the German Reich recognize the sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria and the right to self-determination of its people.

The Reich Government accordingly regard all Austrian parties or groups including the Austrian NSDAP as an internal Austrian affair, which they will influence neither directly nor indirectly.

II. The Austrian Federal Government will, in general, and particularly with regard to the German Reich, maintain a policy based always on the principle that Austria acknowledges herself to be a German State.

In consideration of the fact [and in the belief]<sup>7</sup> that the *détente* desired by both sides can only be achieved if certain preliminary conditions are provided by the Governments of both countries themselves, the Government of the Reich and the Austrian Federal Government will, in a series of individual measures, create the basic conditions necessary.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Papen's handwriting: "June 23, [19]36. Obersalzberg. Approved by the Führer."

<sup>7</sup> In the original the words here enclosed in square brackets have been crossed out.

[Enclosure 2]

June 22, 1936.

DRAFT OF A GENTLEMEN [*sic*]-AGREEMENT<sup>8</sup>

Convinced that the mutually expressed desire for the re-establishment of normal and friendly relations between the German Reich and the Federal State of Austria requires a series of preliminary stipulations on the part of the two Governments, both Governments approve the following confidential Gentleman [*sic*]-Agreement:

I. *Regulation of the Treatment of Reich-Germans in Austria and of Austrian Nationals in the Reich*

Associations of Reich German nationals existing in Austria shall not be obstructed in their activities as long as they comply with the principles laid down in their statutes and do not interfere in internal Austrian affairs nor, in particular, endeavour to influence citizens of the Austrian Federal State by means of propaganda.

Associations of Austrian citizens, as well as all clubs, etc. which, in the Reich, concern themselves with safeguarding the interests of Austrian citizens shall not be obstructed in their activities so long as they are not contrary to the rules laid down in their statutes in accordance with the Reich laws at present obtaining.

II. *Mutual Cultural Relations*

All factors decisive for the formation of public opinion of both countries shall serve the purpose of re-establishing normal and friendly relations. With the thought that both countries belong within the German cultural orbit, both parties pledge themselves immediately to renounce any aggressive utilization of radio, motion picture, newspaper and theatrical facilities against the other party. A gradual elimination of presently existing restrictions on [cultural] exchange is envisaged on the basis of absolute reciprocity. As far as the sale of works of authors of either country in the territory of the other country is concerned, all restrictions are to be removed, in so far as these works are in conformity with the laws of the country of entry.

III. *The Press*

Both parties shall influence their respective press to the end that it refrain from exerting any political influence on conditions in the other country and limit its objective criticism of conditions in the other

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note: "June 23, [19]36. Obersalzberg. Approved by the Führer. P[apen]."



country to an extent not offensive to public opinion in the other country. This obligation also applies to the *émigré* press in both countries.

The gradual elimination of prohibitions on the importation of newspapers and printed matter of the other party is envisaged by both parties, in relation to the extent of the *détente* in mutual relations attained through in this Agreement.

Newspapers admitted shall refrain completely from any criticism of the internal political situation in the other country.<sup>9</sup>

The Austrian Federal Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Austria of the following newspapers published in Germany:

.....

The German Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Germany of the following newspapers published in Austria:

.....

#### IV. *Émigré Problem*

Both parties agree in their desire to contribute by reciprocal concessions to the speediest possible satisfactory solution of the problem of the Austrian National Socialist *émigrés* in the Reich. It is envisaged that a mixed commission will meet forthwith to settle the questions arising from the *émigré* problem.

#### V. *National Insignia and National Anthems*

Each of the two Governments declare that, within the scope of existing laws, they will place the nationals of the other party on an equal footing with nationals of third States in regard to the display of the national insignia of their country.

The singing of national anthems shall—in addition to official occasions—be permitted to nationals of the other party at closed meetings attended by these nationals exclusively.

#### VI. *Economic Relations*

The Government of the German Reich, putting aside considerations of Party policy, are prepared to open the way for normal economic relations between the German Reich and Austria, and this readiness extends also to the re-establishment of local frontier traffic [*der Kleine Grenzverkehr*]. Discrimination against persons and areas, if not based upon purely economic considerations, will not be undertaken.

Preferences?

<sup>9</sup> In the original this sentence has been inserted by hand.

## VII. *Tourist Traffic*

The restrictions on tourist traffic imposed by both sides because of the tensions which had arisen between the two States shall be lifted. This understanding shall not affect restrictions based on the legislation of both countries for the protection of foreign exchange.

In order to avoid undesirable consequences, the two countries shall reach a provisional understanding concerning the maximum quotas, which shall be increased from time to time; relatives, persons travelling on business, and athletes shall receive preferential treatment as hitherto.

## VIII. The Federal Chancellor Declares that he is Prepared:

a) To conduct *the foreign policy* of the Austrian Federal Government in the light of the peaceful endeavours of the German Reich Government's foreign policy. The Rome Protocols of 1934 and the Supplementary Protocols of 1936, as well as the position of Austria with regard to Italy and Hungary as parties to these Protocols, are not affected thereby.

b) To grant *a far-reaching political amnesty*, from which persons who have committed serious public crimes shall be excluded.

Also covered by this amnesty shall be persons who have not yet been sentenced by judicial verdict or punished by administrative process.

c) For the purpose of promoting a real pacification, to appoint at the appropriate moment, contemplated for the near future, *representatives of the hitherto so-called "National Opposition"* in Austria to *participate in political responsibility*; they shall be persons who enjoy the personal confidence of the Federal Chancellor and whose selection he reserves to himself.

It is agreed, in this connection, that the persons trusted by the Federal Chancellor shall be charged with the task of arranging, within the Federal Government, in accordance with a plan worked out with the Federal Chancellor beforehand, for the internal pacification of the National Opposition and for its participation in the shaping of the political will in Austria.

## IX. *Procedure for Objections and Complaints*

For the handling of objections and complaints which may arise in connection with the above Gentleman [*sic*]-Agreement, there shall be established a joint commission composed of three representatives of the Foreign Ministry of each country. Its task shall be to discuss at regular meetings the operation of the agreements as well as any supplements thereto which may be required.

## No. 402

7790/E562690-93

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief  
of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 584

LONDON, June 24, 1936.

SK 146.

The Counsellor of Embassy is informed.

Subject: The Naval negotiations.

I. On the occasion of the birthday of H.M. the King, Mr. Craigie, Under Secretary of State, Foreign Office, has been awarded a high decoration, carrying with it the title Sir,<sup>1</sup> in recognition of his services during the Naval Conference.

(Captain Danckwerts has also been decorated for the same reasons.)

Occasioned by this decoration I called on Sir Robert Craigie today and, with the object of carrying out Ambassador von Ribbentrop's written instructions (Foreign Ministry [communication] of June 12, 1936 and signed: Dr. Kordt),<sup>2</sup> came to speak of the size of the "B"-class cruisers to be built on the basis of the Memorandum of June 9.<sup>3</sup>

I told Craigie that we intend to build the two "B"-class cruisers to approximately the same size as the British "Southampton" class. Craigie took note of this information without making any objections. In order to clarify the matter he asked only for confirmation that these two cruisers would be built out of our "B"-class cruiser tonnage allotment and that, in accordance with the objections we had raised, we still reserved the right to use the 20,000 tons in the "A"-class cruiser tonnage allotment for the construction of "A"-class cruisers, should the need arise; so that, in the event of other nations building any "A"-class cruisers, Germany would lay down four large cruisers (two "B"-class and two "A"-class cruisers) if need be during the current year.

I confirmed that this was our intention, but that, of course, it still entirely depended upon dockyard facilities and so on.

II. Sir Robert Craigie then gave me the following information with regard to the state of the naval negotiations between Soviet Russia and Great Britain. He expressly told me that he was giving me more information than he had as yet given France and America, and that he therefore requested me to treat it as confidential. But he thought it

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Craigie was created Knight Commander of the Order of St. Michael and St. George (K.C.M.G.) on June 23, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Not found.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 361.

was important that we should start considering the following points already now.

(a) The Soviet Russians are prepared to conclude a naval agreement with the British. They wished their acceptance of such an agreement to be limited solely to the European portion of their fleet, however, in view of the fact that the Japanese had accepted none of the obligations of the new treaty. In this connection they stated that they wished to divide their naval forces into independent units comprising a Far Eastern, a Baltic and a Black Sea Fleet.<sup>4</sup> They were compelled to keep secret all information with regard to their Far Eastern Fleet as long as the Japanese were unwilling to give any advance information in the manner envisaged in the new treaty.

They were ready in regard to their Far Eastern Fleet not to exceed the qualitative limitations laid down in the treaty for as long as they knew that the Japanese were doing likewise. But the situation in the Far East was so threatening, that they were compelled to maintain military secrecy there in all circumstances.

For their part the British could not ignore these arguments and were inclined to accept them, particularly as the building-up of the Russian Fleet in the Far East would still take some considerable time.

(b) In view of the fact that France, Italy and Germany were building, or were intending to build, capital ships with armaments of over 14-inch calibre, the Russians claimed the right to build at least two battleships if need be armed with guns of over 14-inch calibre.

(c) As usual the greatest stumbling-block was the "A"-class cruiser. The Russians had declared that they would not be in a position, within the foreseeable future, to produce a 6.1-inch gun such as was envisaged by treaty for cruiser tonnage. The Russians had successfully completed their normal 7.1-inch gun<sup>5</sup> and they were disinclined to abandon it, since they possessed neither the experience nor the technical facilities for another gun.

They had, however, declared themselves ready to abstain from building any cruiser of more than 8,000 tons. Their position in the Far East, however, demanded a large number of these cruisers, and that as quickly as possible, so that they could not wait for the construction of a 6.1-inch gun, since they had a feeling that, in view of their maritime situation in the Far East, they had already made much too late a start.

But the British Admiralty had refused to count these vessels as "B"-class cruisers, and a difficult situation had in consequence arisen.

Sir Robert Craigie declared that, if the Russians proved obdurate, Germany might, of course, have a right to build "A"-class cruisers if necessary. In this connection, however, he made statements to me

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Mössel's handwriting: "So could any other country (note by C in C on the top copy)."

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "18 cm."



about "A"-class cruiser construction similar to those which he had previously made on another occasion, and he explained that, quite apart from the fact that the "A"-class cruiser had so far not given satisfaction to a single maritime Power anywhere in the world, the French would, in view of our intentions, most probably build two further cruisers, thus enlarging their original programme, as already announced at the opening of the last naval conference, from seven to nine "A"-class cruisers. Then the Japanese too, who up till now had abided by their limitations, would immediately start building further "A"-class cruisers.

For the Americans, certainly, the situation had not been altered by the "A"-class cruiser holiday,<sup>6</sup> as they were not in any case permitted to build any cruisers in this class before 1942.<sup>7</sup>

Sir Robert Craigie admitted that this question of "A"-class cruisers had been a particularly delicate and awkward one throughout the whole course of the negotiations.

He did not, in any case, wish to give any details or to make any comments, as all the negotiations were still in full swing.

He did, however, consider it necessary to emphasize once again the great importance which was attached to Germany's not making use of the construction of the Russian cruisers—which, after all, had not yet been finally classified as "A"-class cruisers—as a reason for constructing "A"-class cruisers.

He asked me whether I myself thought that Germany attached great importance to the construction of the two "A"-class cruisers, to which I replied that, in my opinion, this was certainly the case, as, indeed, was apparent from our Memorandum of May 4.<sup>8</sup> We had moreover only abandoned our intentions in deference to British wishes. The general view was, of course, completely in favour of "A"-class cruisers, if only for tactical reasons.

III. Sir Robert Craigie further informed me that a Memorandum in reply to the German Memoranda of May 4 and June 9 was in course of preparation and that he would be communicating it to me in the very near future.

A draft treaty was also being prepared, but it would probably be best to discuss this with Germany after the Russian negotiations had been brought to a definite conclusion.<sup>9</sup>

WASSNER

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<sup>6</sup> This word is in English in the original.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Ciliac's handwriting: "Britain perhaps?"

<sup>8</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>9</sup> A memorandum, SK 116 geh. dated July 10 (7790/E562694-97) commenting on the document here printed, was submitted to Raeder by Ciliac; a number of these comments relating to the Soviet position were embodied in document No. 459.

## No. 403

1486/368481-86

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

3116

ROME, June 25, 1936.

Pol. IV 1062.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Italy's foreign policy situation, before the opening of the League of Nations session.<sup>1</sup>

Since my conversation with the new Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, which I reported by telegram,<sup>2</sup> I have had a number of discussions on foreign affairs with the new Under Secretary of State, Bastianini, and one with the Propaganda Minister, Dino Alfieri. At the moment Bastianini stresses at every opportunity that he is new to his job and must first become thoroughly acquainted with the problems at issue. His remarks were, therefore, of a somewhat general nature. Even so, the above conversations, supplemented by information from a reliable confidant, gave an approximate picture of the present trends in Italian foreign policy.

*Sanctions*

Although the abolition of sanctions is today regarded as almost certain, Italian policy is still clinging to the line hitherto taken of representing with marked singleness of purpose the removal of sanctions as the overriding aim of Italian policy. Both Bastianini and Alfieri stressed in this context the view which I have already reported that Italy considered the right thing was progress step by step, i.e., she did not want to burden or complicate the sanctions problem by raising other questions, such as that of recognition; once sanctions had been lifted, one would go further and set one's sights at those aims which logically followed from the way things developed. Thus, for example, no fuss is being made over the Austrian gesture of describing, in Herr von Berger-Waldenegg's credentials,<sup>3</sup> the King of Italy as also Emperor of Ethiopia. Herr von Berger himself told me that the Italians had informed him that at the moment they were making no request whatever for recognition. This attitude on Italy's part is undoubtedly dictated by her desire to avoid doing anything which might prove an

<sup>1</sup> The second part of the ninety-second session of the League of Nations Council opened at Geneva on June 26, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> Telegram No. 96 of June 18 (document No. 381).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 381, footnote 6.

obstacle in the way of direct talks with Britain. It is fully realized here that in spite of the political victory over Britain and the triumphant subjection of Abyssinia, the game is by no means over yet. In this respect anxiety lest at some time or other Britain may be expected to take her revenge is less in evidence than the direct pressure which is being exerted on Italy by the continued presence of the British Fleet and Britain's political activities<sup>4</sup> in the Mediterranean.

### *The Mediterranean*

The Mediterranean is at present the focal point of all Italy's political considerations. Now that the German stroke of March 7,<sup>5</sup> together with Germany's daily growing military strength, appear to have deprived France of the possibility of fulfilling her alliance obligations in the East by direct means, the Mediterranean appears to be of the greatest importance as a military deployment area and also as a line of supply for war material—in short, it has become the obvious channel of communication for effective French military action at the side of Russia or of the Little Entente. Italy, as the central Mediterranean Power, regards this new development with extreme mistrust. This state of affairs explains the exceptional, not to say tense, attention (cf. today's press report in this connection)<sup>6</sup> with which the Montreux Conference<sup>7</sup> is being followed; this is being considered here less from the point of view of the Straits question proper than from that of the political alignments in the Mediterranean.

### *Attitude towards individual Nations*

The attitude which Italy is at present adopting towards the individual great Powers may be deduced from the above outline.

### *France*

Relations with France have for the moment receded somewhat into the background. Characteristic of the Italian attitude is a strong mistrust of the intentions of the Blum Government<sup>8</sup> and a low opinion of France just now as an element in the situation. French foreign policy tends to be regarded here as having not only anti-German, but also

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<sup>4</sup> For details of mutual aid arrangements made between Great Britain, on the one hand, and France, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia, on the other, for collaboration in the event of special measures of a military character by Italy against any one of them, see British White Paper, Cmd. 5072 of 1936: *Dispute between Ethiopia and Italy, Correspondence in connection with the application of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, January 1936*. See also document No. 449, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 3.

<sup>6</sup> Not found.

<sup>7</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 315, footnote 3.

anti-Italian tendencies towards encirclement, the aim of which would be to exert, by means of suitable new groupings in Europe and the Mediterranean, such pressure upon the two great Central European Powers that they would be compelled to fall in with French aims; these aims, however, would primarily be determined by the dependence of the French Government on the Communist, Jewish and Freemasons' Internationals, a dependence which, as far as the Jews and Freemasons are concerned, is also mainly of a financial nature. As regards French political methods, these, in the Italian view, still consist in an often petty and short-sighted haggling to obtain the necessary guarantees against the German nightmare.

### *Britain*

It is believed that in Britain's decision to abolish sanctions<sup>9</sup> a dual purpose may be perceived: on the one hand an effort to secure freedom of action in the face of France's policy of haggling for guarantees and so to steal a march on her, and on the other a desire to prevent a German-Italian bloc from materializing. As a result of the threatening situation in the Mediterranean and the continuation of political and military pressure put upon her by Britain, Italy is most anxious to get into conversations with Britain in order to prevent both undesirable decisions at Geneva—which are still quite possible even should sanctions be lifted—and a Mediterranean bloc from materializing either against or without Italy.

### *Russia*

Where Russia is concerned the tendency towards a *rapprochement* with Moscow (which was apparent in the heyday of sanctions) with a view to calling forth a Russian initiative against the sanctions has now naturally receded into the background. It is true that in view of Turkish policy over the Straits and the Mediterranean, the consideration still carries some weight that by establishing good relations with Russia she could be prevented from falling in absolutely with this policy. On the other hand, however, the thought of resisting the Bolshevik struggle for power being waged in collaboration with Czechoslovakia, Rumania and France is once more gaining ground.

### *Germany*

Relations with Germany are best illustrated by the extremely animated way in which the familiar *Börsenzeitung* article on the need for bringing in Italy has been received. There is little doubt that the

<sup>9</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 639.



construction placed upon this article went beyond its real import. Just as, on the German side, such trains of thought are inspired, alongside the genuine desire to bring in Italy, by the idea of providing arguments to counter the British pressure for a reply,<sup>10</sup> so, on the other side, Italian policy treats this German utterance as a warning shot fired at Britain and France. This twofold reservation does not, however, alter the fact that both Germany's and Italy's interests justify the formula: "In Europe, nothing without Italy's participation, nothing without Germany's participation!" This slogan, entailing no onerous commitments, is also eminently suited to serve as a basis for a certain amount of cooperation between Germany and Italy. In the above-mentioned conversations I played variations upon this theme and met with complete understanding for it. At the same time I pointed out how disturbing it was that Czechoslovakia and Rumania were drawing closer and closer to Soviet Russia from whom Yugoslavia was noticeably holding aloof. The thought that the Soviet Russian alliance policy is at the root of all evil and is just as hostile and dangerous to Fascist Italy as it is to National Socialist Germany is, in this connection, particularly obvious. Finally a further sphere which fills Italy with extreme mistrust (a mistrust which comes very largely under the same common denominator as does our own mistrust) is that constituted by the plans cropping up in various parts of Europe for a reform of the League of Nations combined with regional pacts based on *assistance mutuelle*.

To sum up it may be said that Italy's political leaders still regard the situation as obscure, unstable and fraught with danger; in Italy's opinion, there seems as yet no prospect of a genuine internal "Accordo" in Europe. Recognition of important common interests with Germany and the desire to work on certain parallel lines are there. I think it would be right to respond to this within the framework of our own interests so as to ensure that Italy will not go over to a front directed against Germany. May I in this connection revert to the suggestion made at the end of my telegram No. 96 of June 18.<sup>11</sup>

HASELL

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<sup>10</sup> i.e. to the British questionnaire; see document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>11</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting against this sentence: "Settled." Hassell's telegram No. 96 of June 18 is printed as document No. 381, but reference may be intended to telegram No. 98 of June 20, for which see document No. 390.

## No. 404

3254H/E000792-95

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

3124

ROME, June 25, 1936.

Pol. IV 1061.

Subject: Italy and the restoration of the Habsburgs.

With reference to your despatch Pol. IV 825 of June 20.<sup>1</sup>

When I left Italy before my stay in Berlin,<sup>2</sup> I had the impression that the danger of a Habsburg restoration could not be considered acute and that Italy had not actually consented to it. It was precisely during my stay there that a great number of reports poured into Berlin asserting that the reverse was true. As I already reported verbally at the time, I spoke to Ambassador Attolico urgently in Berlin, about this matter,<sup>3</sup> whereupon he assured me that these reports in no way corresponded with the facts. As proof he gave me to read a telegram from the Italian Foreign Ministry to him in which the familiar visit of the three English Lords [*sic*] to Mussolini was described.<sup>4</sup> At the end of this report it was stated that Lord Mansfield had said that, in his view, the only possible way of maintaining Austria's independence lay in a restoration of the Habsburgs, to which Mussolini had replied that he must regard this measure as an extremely dangerous one calculated to cause the most serious complications, especially on the part of the Little Entente.

The impression that Mussolini and the Italian Government are not encouraging a restoration of the Habsburgs at present was also confirmed to me in Rome in my conversations with Ciano, Bastianini and Alfieri. All three agreed in stating that these reports were tendentious, as in fact a restoration was neither acute nor was it desired by Italy. I emphasized to them, as I had done in my conversation with Signor Attolico, that a Habsburg restoration would be a very serious event from the German point of view and that, even if Italy had no hand in the game, at our end the general conviction would be that the conversations between Mussolini and Schuschnigg were, in the last analysis, the groundwork politically of such an event.

With regard to the article in the *Reichspost*,<sup>5</sup> it is true that it was published in the Italian press, but it was neither prominently displayed

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 393 and footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> According to the Foreign Ministry telegram control register, Hassell was away from Rome June 5-15.

<sup>3</sup> No other record has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Lord Mansfield, A. R. Wise, M.P., and Kenneth de Courcy, members of the British Imperial Policy Group, were received by Mussolini on June 1, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> Of June 16; see document No. 393.

nor commented on in any way. The Propaganda Ministry stated shortly afterwards, on its own initiative, that some foreign newspapers had connected certain publications in the Austrian press with an agreement with the Italian Government. No action on the part of the Italian Government had justified the assumption that these publications were inspired by them. When questioned the spokesman of the Propaganda Ministry confirmed that the *Reichspost* article was the one referred to.

With regard to Italy's real attitude towards the Habsburg restoration, I think I must assume that Mussolini's personal dislike of it and also of the Pretender Otto himself, persists. Besides, I do not think that Mussolini can in any way consider the present moment appropriate for favouring a restoration. In my opinion Mussolini's view of the problem is that both the *Anschluss* and the Habsburg restoration are distasteful to him. Should things in the foreseeable future develop in such a way as to make him think that he is faced with the choice of one of these two alternatives, he would, even though unwillingly, certainly decide for restoration. Whether any Austrian circles desire and are already in a position to carry out a restoration in the near future, while hoping for Mussolini's tacit indulgence, I cannot determine from here. The best way of replying to the danger of a restoration would certainly be for us to "wedge our foot in the Austrian door".

I had the opportunity today of discussing German-Austrian relations and the restoration question with Herr von Berger-Waldenegg.<sup>6</sup> He maintained that the restoration was discussed much more in the non-Austrian press and in irresponsible circles within Austria than in responsible Austrian circles, or than was justified by the facts. It was true that monarchist sentiment as such was becoming ever more widespread in Austria, but there was no question of the Austrian Government's being willing to urge the restoration either now or in the near future.

Regarding German-Austrian relations themselves, he expressed himself in terms remarkably similar to those which Mussolini has repeatedly used to me; the basis from which to proceed, he said, was that Austria was a German State and that the two German States must definitely pursue a parallel policy, which meant, of course, that the large State would be the determining factor. If, during the past two years, it had sometimes appeared otherwise, this was unnatural and a regrettable consequence of unfortunate happenings in relation to which it was pointless to discuss the question of blame. German-Austrian discussion was impaired by the fact that it was constantly concerned with things of the past and with clearing up old differences; it would be much more practical if, to begin with, we could bear in mind

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<sup>6</sup> See document No. 381, footnote 6.

the great common aim to which he had alluded and try to discover those points on which we could begin to cooperate. Everything else would follow of its own accord. The real enemy today was Bolshevism against which it was necessary to form a front. I made several protests to the effect that the general ideas expressed by him were certainly very good and fine, but that one could not avoid dealing with the real points of difference. He held to his opinion, however, and stated that Mussolini had also expressed himself to him in this way.

HASSELL

## No. 405

7621/357406-10

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2620

LONDON, June 26, 1936.

Received June 29.

Pol. II 675.

Subject: Observations on current British foreign policy:

1. Powerful upsurge of the rearmament idea;
2. Determination to reorganize the League of Nations and collective security;
3. Decisive importance of the German attitude.

The more the Italians' march into Addis Ababa recedes in time,<sup>1</sup> the more clearly the idea begins to take root in the political thought of Britain that this event has constituted a decisive turning-point in British history.

The Englishman generally reacts slowly to new facts; and the realization that the disappearance of the Empire of Abyssinia from the map of the Red Sea is irrevocable has not penetrated quickly here. With the greatest difficulty and by dint of endless repetition the leading statesmen, with the Prime Minister himself at their head, have tried in the last few weeks to bring home to the people that the League of Nations in its present form has finally broken down, and that a reversal of the Italian conquest would be obtainable only by force of arms. In spite of this, as a mere glance at the Labour press and a large part of the Liberal press shows, this realization is still by no means general. But the fact that the realistic policy of abolishing sanctions introduced by the Government was accepted so quickly and with such relative ease shows, however, that this realization has already gained considerable ground.

<sup>1</sup> Marshal Badoglio's forces entered Addis Ababa on May 5, 1936.



Although this development is, for the time being, still completely fluid and its further course in no way foreseeable, it has, in my opinion, already now resulted in the following:

The collapse of the faith, previously obtaining, in the power of the League of Nations to secure peace has caused a large part of the British public to become convinced that a war will be unavoidable sooner or later, or at least could only be checked by a Britain armed right up to the limits of her capacity. The result of this is that the previously existent opposition to the rearmament programme is as good as completely broken. Today the armaments propaganda is finding advocates not only among the purely nationalistic elements, but even among the apostles of collective security and of the League of Nations. The first and most obvious indication of the present situation is a tremendous and almost irrepressible upsurge of the rearmament policy such as appeared unthinkable a few months ago.

Moreover, after the collapse of the optimism which has existed so far and after the obvious failure of the means hitherto employed for securing peace, a further conviction has imposed itself, namely, that a complete reorientation of policy is now unavoidable, bringing with it the question of what shape this policy should take.

The British temperament is not inclined towards abrupt changes of front. The fact that an instrument which has been used till now and which he has considered to be useful to his own interests, has failed at a given moment, does not, in itself, tempt the Englishman to throw it on the scrap-heap at once and to look round for a new one of a different kind. On the contrary, he first tries to make good the deficiencies which have become apparent, to improve the old instrument to which he is accustomed and adapt it to his new purposes. Only when this proves to be completely hopeless, will he decide to look for a new one. This example characterizes to some extent the attitude which Britain is today adopting towards the League of Nations, and which finds expression at the end of Baldwin's latest speech.<sup>2</sup> Up till now it certainly cannot be said that the League of Nations has forfeited the support of Britain, despite the loss of prestige which it has suffered. People are merely viewing it more realistically, exploring its weak points and considering, seriously and without haste, how it can be repaired. Britain is today at this stage of deliberation and it can hardly be assumed that she will come to any final decisions before the September session of the Council. Until then the British public, as is said here, are keeping their minds open and accessible to all solutions. This breathing-space, however, is being used all the more industriously to illuminate every angle of the problem, and to study all the pre-

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<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to Stanley Baldwin's speech of June 23, 1936, in the House of Commons. See *Parl. Deb.*, H. of C., vol. 313, cols. 1718-30.

requisites obtaining and the possibilities of a solution which present themselves.

Even at this present stage, however, the conclusion seems to have been reached that the most important, indeed the overriding, pre-requisite for any solution consists in obtaining a clear view of the German attitude. Germany is increasingly acquiring a key position in the eyes of British policy. It is realized that any settlement of the European peace system and of collective security must remain imperfect if Germany dissociates herself from it. But since there is determination to undertake the creation of a new system whatever happens, with or without Germany, it is desired, as the former solution is naturally preferred, to try in every possible way to induce Germany to give a positive answer. Hence the recent almost violent pressure for a reply to the questionnaire. A negative answer would be keenly regretted, as no one is unaware of the fact that one would then be forced to have recourse to a European settlement which would be strongly reminiscent of the encirclement policy of the pre-war era. But even a negative answer would be preferred here to no answer at all, since at least it would clarify the situation and would put Britain in a position finally to establish the new guiding principles of her policy. From this point of view the phrase which has been often heard lately, "The decision as to the peace of Europe lies today with Berlin", seems to be honestly meant, as seen from here.

Under the shadow of this German question all other aspects of British policy, even her relations with Italy, are at the moment of secondary importance only. Until this question is regarded as clarified, whether in a positive or in a negative sense, the individual moves of British policy will continue to be merely *ad hoc* expedients in each instance. It is obvious that the longer the German answer is in coming, the stronger will be the forces which ascribe an aggressive policy to Germany and are doubtful as to her genuine love of peace. This development is already becoming clearly apparent in the press and in a number of speeches by politicians, and this explains why the circles who are well-disposed towards us are pressing us to spoil our adversaries' game by speedily defining the German attitude.<sup>3</sup>

BISMARCK

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "[For the] R[eich] C[hancellor]. v[on] N[eurath], June 31." (ii) "Due back on July 10. L[ammers], July 2." (iii) "The Führer is informed. L[ammers], July 11."

## No. 406

654/256233-35

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Spain to the Foreign Ministry*

2251

MADRID, June 27, 1936.

Received June 30.

Pol. III 165.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Internal situation in Spain.

With reference to my report 1904 of June 8.<sup>1</sup>*Further aggravation of the situation.*

The development of the internal situation in Spain, in the ups and downs of its movements, has once again reached a low point. The pressure of the two parallel radical schools of thought, of Moscow Communism (Largo Caballero) and Anarcho-Syndicalism, has recently again increased to a dangerous degree.

*Untimely attack by the Right in the Chamber.*

In point of time this intensified activity, which is again taking the form of strikes which paralyse the whole of commercial and economic life, of ever more overt and clamorous threats and of more and more outrages, assassinations and bomb-throwing, began again the moment the monarchist and bourgeois Right launched a united attack in the Chamber against the Government through Calvo Sotelo<sup>2</sup> and Gil Robles<sup>3</sup> and demanded the restoration of public safety. This understandable but untimely attack immediately caused the differences in the revolutionary camp, on whose further intensification the Government had set such high hopes, to die down, and moreover forced the Government into defending the line of the Popular Front.

*Incapacity of the Government.*

The incapacity of the Government to master their problems together with their lack of the resolution required to cause the executive forces at their command to restore order, or themselves to take energetic steps against the strikes which they themselves have declared illegal, even though this might mean a breach in the Popular Front, constantly gives

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (654/256224-32/1); this report dealt with Spain's internal political situation after one month of the new Government under Casares Quiroga.

<sup>2</sup> José Calvo Sotelo, a Monarchist Deputy; he was assassinated on July 13, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 221, and footnote 9 thereto.

fresh encouragement to the agitators (who by their terrorism are enforcing all their demands), and manifestly prepares the ground for these persons to carry out their violent plans.

*Differences amongst the Marxists temporarily shelved. Intensified activity.*

The differences between the Marxist Right wing, which aims at settlement [*Ausgleich*], under Prieto who has the majority of the parliamentary group behind him, and the radical section of the Party under Largo Caballero, who is supported by the mass of the populace, have at the moment receded as much into the background as have the constant differences between Largo Caballero and the Anarcho-Syndicalists, whose tactics run parallel with his, both having the immediate aim of bringing down the weak Government. Whether either the extraordinary session of the Social Democratic Party convened by Largo Caballero and scheduled for July or the regular Party Congress organized by his opponent within the Party, Prieto, and scheduled for October, will bring about a solution of the Marxist quarrels in the sense desired by the Government, namely that Prieto's withdrawal should compromise and critically weaken Largo Caballero, appears in present circumstances to be more and more doubtful.

*Government anxiety*

At the moment the Government are again extremely anxious. They have discovered that the Left wing groups have received fresh instructions from Amsterdam<sup>4</sup> and Moscow, and they fear that there may be serious unrest in the course of the summer, when because of the holidays, the Government's personnel is in any case particularly reduced. At the same time the Government also believe, on the strength of information they have received alleging that there is collaboration between French and Spanish Fascists, that there is a possibility of a *coup de main* engineered by the Right. For all this possibility can be taken as less serious since it exists more in the imagination [*Psychose*] of the present rulers than in actual fact, nonetheless the situation as a whole, quite apart from the constantly increasing economic and financial difficulties, must at present again be considered very grave. The endeavours to reorganize the Government continue.

VOELCKERS

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<sup>4</sup> i.e., the offices of the Second International.



## No. 407

1744/402804

*The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE  
No. 66BERLIN, June 29, 1936—8:25 p.m.  
Pol. IV 1084 II.

For the Minister personally.

With reference to my [telegram] No. 65 of today.<sup>1</sup>

If, at the forthcoming conversation with the Austrian Federal Chancellor, the formula, proposed by us, relating to the right to self-determination cannot be put through, I recommend trying to obtain acceptance of paragraph 1 of the communiqué in the following form:

The German Government renew the declaration repeatedly made by them, and in particular by the Führer and Chancellor in his speech of May 21, 1935, that they have themselves no intention of interfering in the sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria.<sup>2</sup>

This formula would avoid the appearance of a retreat whilst the right to self-determination would be indirectly retained.

NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 408, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "Draft in accordance with proposal by Herr M[inisterial] D[irektor] Gaus." For Hitler's speech of May 21, 1935, see vol. iv, Editors' Note, p. 171.

## No. 408

1744/402796-99

*Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV*BERLIN, June 29, 1936.  
Pol. IV 1067.

I. As the conversation between Herr von Papen and the Austrian Federal Chancellor fixed for Friday, June 26, was twice postponed, and finally until 7 p.m., there was sufficient time for the proposed amendments to the Schuschnigg reconciliation programme, worked out in the Foreign Ministry and approved by the Führer, to be discussed and explained.<sup>1</sup> In so doing, in accordance with the Foreign Minister's in-

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<sup>1</sup> No other record has been found. The files of the German Legation in Vienna contain drafts of the Gentlemen's Agreement (8678/E607250-55) and the Communiqué (8678/E607256-57), each of which bears the marginal note in Papen's handwriting: "Handed to the Federal Chancellor on June 26." These drafts correspond with the enclosures to document No. 401, except that they include the amendments indicated in the document here printed.

structions I emphasized that for our part we attached importance to the wording of the communiqué and to agreement in principle, and that the Gentlemen [*sic*]-Agreement should not therefore be encumbered by the inclusion of too many points.

II. In accordance with the remarks on Article I of the Gentlemen [*sic*]-Agreement, Herr von Papen has proposed to Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg the following wording designed to observe the principle of parity:

"The associations of their nationals existing in either country shall not be obstructed in their activities as long as they comply with the principles laid down in their statutes in conformity with the laws in force and do not interfere in the internal political affairs of the other State nor, in particular, endeavour to influence nationals of the other State by means of propaganda."

Furthermore, in Article VIII Herr von Papen has replaced the words "the Federal Chancellor declares" by the words "the Austrian Federal Government declare", and after the first sentence has inserted the words:

"It is agreed that the two Governments will from time to time enter into an exchange of views on the problems of foreign policy affecting both of them."

Sections (b) and (c) of [Article] VIII have been combined by Herr von Papen into a new Article IX (a) and (b), and they are simply "declared by the Federal Chancellor".

In order to create the possibility of further expanding the Gentlemen Agreement after reconciliation has taken place, Herr von Papen has inserted in the final clause concerning the duties of the Complaints Commission the addition: "as well as in order to guarantee a progressive *détente* within the framework of the preceding agreements".

III. According to information from Herr von Papen, Herr Schuschnigg stated that he agreed in principle to our proposals with the exception of the wording of the self-determination clause<sup>2</sup>, but that he reserved to himself the right to make a study of the whole until Tuesday, June 30, for which day a fresh conversation between the two gentlemen has been fixed. With regard to the formula relating to the right of self-determination, which Herr Schuschnigg did not want to accept even with the addition "like other peoples", he explained that the right of self-determination was a slogan of the National Opposition and it was therefore impossible for him to accept a formula modelled in any way upon such lines. Herr von Papen requested him to reconsider the matter until Tuesday and then perhaps to suggest to him a counter formula. Herr von Papen asks that by Tuesday morning he should be empowered to abandon the demand for a formula relating to the right

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 401 and 407.

of self-determination if Herr Schuschnigg persists in his refusal, so that reconciliation shall not break down on this point.<sup>3</sup>

On point II of our proposal in the communiqué regarding non-interference, which the Federal Chancellor accepted in principle, he thought that the following formula would make a better introduction:

"Each of the two Governments regards the existing internal political structure of the other country, including Austrian National Socialism, as . . ."

IV. Herr von Papen informed Herr Schuschnigg during Friday's conversation that he hoped to report to the Führer at Obersalzberg on [July] the 6th or 7th on the reconciliation negotiations and expressed the hope that by that time the Federal Chancellor's negotiations with the National Opposition in Austria would also be so far advanced towards a conclusion that the signature of the communiqué could take place. Herr Schuschnigg did not gainsay this.

V. Herr von Papen expressed his intention of taking with him for his next conversation with the Führer, in addition to the leader of the National Opposition acknowledged by the Federal Chancellor (Glaise Horstenau), a leader of the illegal Movement in Austria as well. The object of this plan was, he said, by means of personal instructions from the Führer to do away in this discussion with possible opposition on the part of the Movement in Austria towards the reconciliation. I have expressed to Herr von Papen the most serious misgivings about the plan for bringing with him a leader of the illegal Movement, which are also shared by Counsellor of Embassy Prince Erbach and I hope that by our joint efforts we have succeeded in persuading Herr von Papen to abandon this plan.

ALTENBURG

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<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 65 of June 29 (1744/402800) Neurath expressed agreement to Papen abandoning the formula relating to self-determination if insistence on it would endanger the conclusion of the reconciliation negotiations. See also document No. 407.

## No. 409

8062/E579191-93

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 106 of June 29

ROME, June 30, 1936—12:01 a.m.

Received June 30—2:30 a.m.

Pol. I 811.

With reference to your telegram No. 136 of [June] 26.<sup>1</sup>

As, owing to the critical illness of his youngest child, which has today taken a turn for the better (at Ciano's special request please

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 390, footnote 2.

take no notice of this and keep it secret), Mussolini is remaining at Tivoli and has cancelled all his engagements, I carried out your instructions today with Ciano.

Reverting to our last conversation (telegram No. 96 of June 18),<sup>2</sup> I mentioned that he had on that occasion expressed the hope that Germany would adopt a benevolent attitude in the event of the question of recognition becoming acute. I could now, I continued, personally and confidentially inform [*sic*]<sup>3</sup> and him, Ciano, as his first confidant, that the Führer would adopt such a benevolent attitude as soon as the question of recognition became acute. My statement had no other purpose than to give Italy proof of our friendly attitude. Ciano replied that, without forestalling the Duce he could at this stage express the warmest gratitude for this statement whose value would be fully appreciated. It was a new and important factor towards German-Italian understanding, which, incidentally, was being daily furthered by events. Duff Cooper's recent speech<sup>4</sup> threw the clearest light on this situation. Ultimately Germany could not rely on Britain, nor could Italy rely on France, as, in the end, it always came down to the British and French haggling over mutual support in the Mediterranean against Italy and on the Rhine against Germany. Significant, too, was the French idea which Chambrun had brought with him from France and which amounted to a strengthening of Article 16 through regional pacts with *assistance mutuelle* together with collective security through other forms of support.<sup>5</sup> Italy was opposed to this and was inclined to support the Chilean proposal in the sense of localizing conflicts, with which, as he had heard, Germany too was in sympathy. Italy had in any case not yet defined her attitude to all this. I replied that this last also applied to us, but for us the position was quite clear: A discussion on the restoration of sovereignty in the Rhineland no longer came into question for us; I believed I could assume that the Duce also shared this view (this Ciano confirmed). Reconstructions in the sense of Locarno must begin right from the beginning in a new spirit. To this Ciano agreed.

Ciano then went on to say that according to the latest information, the Negus was to appear and to speak before the Plenary Meeting of the Assembly.<sup>6</sup> He had had Eden and Delbos informed that such a proceeding would mean seriously endangering the situation; should Italy

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 381.

<sup>3</sup> The draft (3793/E042465-69) in the Rome Embassy files here reads: "inform Mussolini and him, Ciano . . ."

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 416, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> French proposals for a reform of the League of Nations were submitted to the League Assembly on July 3, 1936, by Foreign Minister Yvon Delbos; for the text of his address see *League of Nations Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*. Special Supplement No. 151, pp. 59-60.

<sup>6</sup> The Emperor of Ethiopia addressed the opening session of the Assembly on June 30, 1936; for the text of his speech see *ibid.*, pp. 22-25.



be made the object of the Negus' invective before 52 States, then Italy might find herself compelled to take fresh decisions the following day. Ciano then read out to me the most important passages from the Italian Pro Memoria which is to be communicated the day after tomorrow.<sup>7</sup> As already reported in my telegram under reference, this contains first a historical *exposé* of the Abyssinian affair, and then a declaration on the nature of the intended Italian civilizing mission in Abyssinia, Etruria [*sic*]<sup>8</sup> in the sense of Article 23 of the League Covenant. The promise to abstain from military training of the natives for other than defence and police purposes will only be given if this is laid down as a general rule. The resumption of Italian cooperation in the League of Nations is promised in the event of the League Assembly showing understanding for the Italian point of view. In order to build a bridge for the League of Nations, it is stated that Italy will consider it a point of honour to keep the League informed of the progress of the work of civilization in Abyssinia. Finally, it is stated that Italy, in accordance with the good will she has always displayed towards international cooperation, has also acceded to the Treaty of . . . (group mutilated):<sup>9</sup> As Ciano added, this declaration is being made because Italy considers she can be sure that any move by Argentina in Geneva will be of a generally declamatory nature, but will not deal specifically with the case of Abyssinia.

HASSELL

<sup>7</sup> For the text of the communication, dated June 29, 1936, addressed by the Italian Government to the President of the Sixteenth Session of the Assembly of the League of Nations, see *ibid.*, pp. 19-21.

<sup>8</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 3 above) here reads: "somewhat [*etwa*]."

<sup>9</sup> The Rome draft (see footnote 3 above) reads: "Rio de Janeiro." Italy was one of four non-American States adhering to this Anti-War Treaty of Oct. 10, 1933, for the text of which see *U.S. Treaty Series* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1936), No. 906.

## No. 410

1744/402805

*The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Austria*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 67 of June 30

BERLIN, June 30, 1936—1:15 p.m.

Pol. IV 1111.

For the Minister personally.

Press reports from Geneva state that Schuschnigg is being summoned to Geneva shortly. If these reports are confirmed it may probably be assumed that the French and the Little Entente, who have learned of

the indiscretions (see my telegram No. 64)<sup>1</sup> wish to exert pressure on Schuschnigg in order to frustrate the attempt at reconciliation.

Please draw the Federal Chancellor's attention to this danger. If necessary, perhaps acceleration of our action might be for consideration. The Führer will probably be in Berlin on July 2. You should report by telegram.<sup>2</sup>

NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> Of June 27 (not printed; 1744/402801); this telegram stated that a Russian *émigré* paper in Paris had published reports, apparently derived from an Austrian source, of the German-Austrian conversations, with great accuracy.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 80 of June 30 to the Foreign Minister (1744/402806) Papen replied: "My conversation with the Federal Chancellor will not take place until Wednesday [July 1]. I shall try to accelerate matters in so far as the plan for internal pacification through Glaise [-Horstenau] progresses. Without complete clarity on Point IX b of the gentleman [*sic*] agreement, any conclusion of peace seems to me to be illusory." A marginal note on this telegram reads: "Correct. A[ltenburg]."

## No. 411

6719/E509850-51

### *The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 43 of June 30

GENEVA, June 30, 1936—5:30 p.m.

Received June 30—6:45 p.m.

Pol. I 830.

This morning Paul Scheffer<sup>1</sup> had a conversation with Delbos<sup>2</sup> which was strictly confidential and not intended for publication; Delbos has hitherto refused other conversations with press representatives. Scheffer calls attention to the following points: Delbos emphasized the need for a German-French discussion. For this a basic concept was necessary. As long as the questionnaire<sup>3</sup> remained unanswered, such a point of departure did not exist. Renewed enquiry in Berlin was a matter for the British.

He was glad that his speech<sup>4</sup> had been read attentively in Germany. He had long known that large sections of the German public sincerely desired a *rapprochement*. It was true there were numerous difficulties but they must be overcome by negotiation. Delbos pointed out afresh that the failure to reply had made a start impossible.

He was unable to regard with satisfaction the German proposal for pacts in watertight compartments. France desired a closer and more exact definition of the obligations under the League of Nations. Should

<sup>1</sup> Foreign Editor of the *Berliner Tageblatt*.

<sup>2</sup> French Foreign Minister since the formation of the Blum Cabinet on June 4, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Evidently a reference to the French Government's foreign policy statement which was read in the Chamber of Deputies by Delbos and in the Senate by Blum on June 23; see *Journal Officiel de la République française*, 1936, *Débats parlementaires, Sénat*, pp. 592-594; *Chambre des Députés*, pp. 1530-1532. See also document No. 414.

Germany continue to maintain reserve, the maintenance of the Locarno Pact would nevertheless have to be envisaged but even so it would always have to remain open to Germany. He was speaking expressly of the Locarno Pact, not of the Stresa front, for that was something quite different.

He definitely desired, contrary to other suppositions, that Germany should soon enter the League.

Like Locarno, the Danubian Pact was a necessity; the pacts were, indeed, not alliances, as asserted in Germany, for they were under the League of Nations. One-sided military agreements within regional pacts, in particular the Rhine Agreement and the Eastern Agreement, such as Germany feared, were out of the question. They would be strictly uniform: "France would not cheat."

He could not believe in the danger of the Soviet Union. If Germany distrusted the Soviet Union, he for his part did not distrust Germany; he would at least go so far as to say that he trusted that when the conversations were set in train they could lead to a settlement. But for this purpose it was necessary that Germany should state her views now that a start for the conversations had been provided through the questionnaire. The questionnaire was meant in an entirely "conciliatory and friendly" spirit. We must now speak frankly and without reservations. "Frankness excluded continued silence."

To supplement this conversation which Scheffer asked should be transmitted in cipher, I would draw your attention to telegrams Nos. 44<sup>5</sup> and 45<sup>6</sup> of June 30 on the state of the Locarno negotiations and on the French attitude to the Austrian question.

KRAUEL

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 412.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 415, footnote 1.

## No. 412

3610/E026897-98

### *The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 44 of June 30

GENEVA, June 30, 1936—9:12 p.m.

Received June 30—11:30 p.m.

Pol. I 823.

With regard to the present state of the Locarno question, I learnt last night and this morning of the following from a reliable source:

On the basis of the Anglo-French understanding, the Locarno question was at first removed from the agenda for the Council session in order to gain time for discussion. The Delbos-Eden conversation of June 28 has, however, not led as yet to any agreement on further pro-

cedure. The idea of despatching a joint enquiry by the Locarno Powers as to whether and when the German Government would reply to the British questionnaire,<sup>1</sup> appears to have been dropped. The search is being continued for a formula by means of which to get into conversation with Germany. That this desire is also shared by the French Government, as emerges from the Delbos-Scheffer conversation which was the subject of telegram No. 43,<sup>2</sup> was reliably confirmed to me by another quarter as well. The British Government too are hoping for a continuation of the discussions; Eden, who is personally extremely annoyed about the German silence, which he regards as a loss of British prestige and as a personal insult, appears, however, to have said during his conversation with Delbos that there could be no question of a fresh British enquiry in Berlin in connection with the British questionnaire. The Belgian Government too desire a discussion on Locarno with Germany, and Minister von Zeeland, who arrives in Geneva today, is to take soundings in this direction with Eden and Delbos at once. In this connection Brussels too is being considered as the venue for the forthcoming Locarno discussions for which, however, no date has as yet been fixed. It has so far not proved possible to obtain any reliable information about possible Italian participation in the Locarno conversations, but it is thought that, should Italy take part in the second stage of the Dardanelles Conference<sup>3</sup> which begins next week, renewed soundings will be made with the Italian Government in this direction too.

The anti-German propaganda which is being disseminated by the world press assembled here is to the effect that, as a result of the German silence, the British *rapprochement* with the Franco-Russian bloc has made concrete progress and that the inclusion of the Italians in this front is imminent. These reports are described by my objective and reliable interlocutors as rumours and as an inexpedient means of exerting pressure on Germany in order to cause us to give way and to surrender our silent reserve. The need and the desire to draw Germany into the international discussions is held (so my confidants believe) to be so imperative that not Germany's going into a discussion of all the details of the British questionnaire, but merely a quite general German reply, which would make possible the resumption of discussions with Germany, is expected [to offer] a way out of the deadlock in the general situation. In this way Germany could, in the opinion of neutral observers, take over the leadership of the discussions for an international *détente* and could frustrate the tendencies towards encirclement which have been gaining emotional force from Germany's continued silence.

KRAUEL

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 411.

<sup>3</sup> The Montreux Conference (see Editors' Note, p. 669) had been adjourned for the meetings of the League Council and Assembly in Geneva and was resumed on July 6.



## No. 413

3412/E014117-19

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, June 30, 1936.

RM 544.

Pol. IV 1182.

The Hungarian Minister called upon me this morning, together with his new Military Attaché, in order to introduce the latter. Afterwards he stayed behind for some time alone and at once turned the conversation to the question of Hungary's equality of rights. He told me approximately what he told Herr Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff on June 26.<sup>1</sup> In reply I told him that, as I had already informed him and Kánya earlier, we should of course lend our moral support to the Hungarian Government's endeavours to achieve complete equality of rights. This would not be limited to an article in the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, but the form it would take would depend on the circumstances prevailing when the event occurred. As far as the actual date was concerned, I must leave the choice to the Hungarian Government. It would, however, probably be useful if the latter were to inform us of their decision in advance so that we might have the opportunity of raising any objections which it might be in the interests of the Hungarian Government for us to make.

The Minister then came to speak once more of German-Italian relations and enquired how they stood. I told him that, as he had no doubt seen for himself, a progressive improvement and *rapprochement* in German-Italian relations was to be observed. I also wished to inform him that we had told Mussolini recently through our Ambassador in Rome,<sup>2</sup> although he had not made enquiries of us, that in the event of the question of recognition of the annexation of Abyssinia becoming acute, we would adopt a benevolent attitude. M. de Sztójay then reverted to what he said were instructions, which he had received some time before from M. de Kánya, to suggest to us the conclusion of a German-Italian treaty of reciprocity [*Gegenseitigkeitsvertrag*]. I told M. de Sztójay in reply that there was not the slightest occasion for concluding such a treaty. Such a treaty would, on the contrary, at this stage complicate still further the already complicated political conditions in Europe, and would in my opinion be in the interests neither of Italy nor of Germany. It was much more important that, through Mussolini exerting his influence in this sense in Vienna, the opportunity

<sup>1</sup> This conversation was recorded by Dieckhoff in a memorandum of June 26 (1847/420909-10) (see also document No. 305 and footnote 5 thereto).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 409.

should at last be created for liquidating the German-Austrian dispute, and in this respect I could now see the beginnings of a certain improvement in the situation hitherto obtaining.

In conclusion I also told the Minister that I had been gratified to learn from the reports of our economic plenipotentiary that the economic agreements between Germany and Hungary had exercised a beneficial influence, particularly on Hungarian agriculture; I hoped that this was also recognized by the Hungarian side.

I was unable to go on to discuss the Basch case<sup>3</sup> as I was called away to a conference.

FREIHERR V. NEURATH

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<sup>3</sup> Dr. Basch was one of the leaders of the pro-National Socialist "Comradeship" group of *Volksdeutsche*. Details of the case in question have not been found.

## No. 414

8795/E613139-42

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

URGENT

Drafting Officer:

Counsellor von Rintelen

BERLIN, June 30, 1936.

zu Pol. II 595<sup>2</sup> Ang. II.

Pol. II 641.<sup>3</sup>

The following is submitted for your information:

Special importance is attached here to the French Government's foreign policy statement of June 23, in that it has dispelled the obscurity previously prevailing as to the course which the new French Government, under Socialist leadership, intend to follow. That the French Government themselves regard this statement as laying down a new course in programme form is already indicated by the unusual procedure under which this statement was read out simultaneously in both the Chamber and the Senate, whereas in accordance with normal parliamentary custom a speech by the Foreign Minister in the Chamber is all that would have been expected.

In respect of its content it is worthy of note that the statement deals with the various problems in a calm and objective manner and thereby differs in a manner gratifying to ourselves from the utterances on foreign policy made by a number of former French Governments.

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Great Britain, Italy, Poland, the Soviet Union, Turkey, Spain, the U.S.A., Belgium, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Rumania, Denmark, and Austria and the Consulate at Geneva; a copy was also sent to the Embassy in France for their information.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (605/247696-705); this was Paris telegram No. 311 of June 23, which gave extracts from the French Government's foreign policy statement, read on that date both in the Chamber and the Senate; see document No. 411, footnote 4.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8795/E613136-38); this was Paris telegram No. 315 of June 25 in which Forster commented upon the French Government's statement.

This fact has indeed also been recognized by the whole German press in its reception of the French Government's statement. The tone of the speech is more accommodating, especially in those passages addressed to Germany, than could have been expected under present conditions, and especially from a Government under Socialist leadership. To this extent the statement can be regarded as a contribution towards the relaxation of tension, even though, in referring to German-French relations, it expressly states that the situation is still serious. On the other hand, however, precisely because of the restrained tone of the French Government's statement, the fundamental divergences between the attitudes of Germany and France towards foreign affairs emerge all the more clearly. This applies especially to the manner in which the French Government seek to put into practice their thesis of indivisible peace by endeavouring, in view of the failure of the League of Nations over the Abyssinian conflict, to strengthen and extend the system of assistance pacts, i.e., especially the French system of alliances. Whether, in view of such tendencies in French politics, it will be possible to find a common denominator between this and the system of peace for which we are striving must remain an open question. That certain degree of scepticism in this respect, which has found expression in the comments of some sections of the German press on the French Government's statement, seems to be only too justified here.

A few remarks on individual points of the French Government statement are set forth in the enclosure.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

[Enclosure]<sup>4</sup>

605/247706-09

BERLIN, June 24, 1936.  
zu Pol. II 595 Ang. I.

From the study of the French Government's statement on foreign policy of June 23, the following points emerge as being especially worthy of note:

*Re (1) The French desire for peace:*

It was to have been expected of a French Left-wing Government that they should uphold the thesis of indivisible peace and place emphasis on loyalty to the League of Nations and also make the strengthening of collective security an express aim of their policy. A sentence deserving attention is: "We do not wish to preach any other

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "Has been submitted to the Foreign Minister. Ko[tze], [June] 26."

crusade than that of reconciliation between the peoples", this presumably implying the abandonment of any idea of a campaign, carried into the realm of foreign policy, against Fascism, but also against Bolshevism—such as is supposed to be an aim of German foreign policy.

### *Re (2) Sanctions:*

This section is striking in its sobriety. All that is said is that France was pledged to participate in sanctions; to continue them, however, would only be a symbolic gesture without any real effectiveness or objectives.

### *Re (3) Reform of the League of Nations:*

The first point to be noted is the departure from Flandin's Memorandum of April 8 of this year<sup>5</sup> ("we are not of the opinion that under present conditions it would be advisable to propose too far-reaching and too ambitious a plan"). A further point deserving attention is the rejection of the idea of a reform of the League of Nations Covenant on the twofold ground, firstly, that such reform would involve the danger that it would take the line of least resistance (i.e., presumably, of least obligation) and, secondly, that there is no question of the League of Nations Covenant having failed, but only of League of Nations States having done so in applying the Covenant, which has been done too late and incompletely. This, as is known, is Léon Blum's old thesis against Laval.

Even if France's only intention here is to permit a new interpretation of the Covenant, none the less this French Government statement says clearly for the first time that it is at present illusory to count on an integral application of Article 16 in case of a conflict arising. On the basis of this recognition the Government's statement arrives at the conclusion that collective security must have two sides (*aspects*): one group of States to be committed to wage war, the other only to participate in economic sanctions. The duality of French foreign policy since the war—League of Nations policy on the one hand, and alliances policy on the other—finds fresh formulation here; for there can be no doubt that, when speaking of a group of States who would be committed to wage war, the French are thinking chiefly of the French system of alliances. This emerges quite clearly from the rider that the groups committed to military action may be formed either on a geographical basis or on the basis of community of interests. The Government's statement then goes on to call both of them "regional assistance pacts". It is said in respect of them that they must never be permitted to turn

<sup>5</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 402.



into alliances on the old pattern, that they must be open to all and that their coming into play must always be dependent on a decision taken by the Council of the League of Nations. This last stipulation, in particular, deserves considerable attention because, as is well known, it runs counter to the wording of the Franco-Russian Pact<sup>6</sup> and is also in contradiction to the previous official French interpretation of Article 16, Paragraph 1, of the Covenant.

*Re (4) Regional pacts:*

With regard to regional pacts the demand is for a Danubian Pact, a Mediterranean Pact and a new Western European Pact. The old French Eastern Pact plan<sup>7</sup> appears in the Government's statement only in so far as in the next section, in mentioning the pact with Soviet Russia, reference is made to this pact being open to all.

In this connection the cordial appeal for Italian cooperation in bringing these pacts into being also deserves attention. ("We shall be happy if her efforts cordially coincide with our own.")

*Re (5) Friendly Powers:*

The enumeration of friendly Powers is worthy of note: Together with the emphasis laid upon cooperation with Britain as "an essential guarantee of peace in Europe"; America and the Soviet Union are included; Poland is mentioned in conjunction with an invitation to "better forms of cooperation". Finally, after the enumeration of Belgium and the States of the Little Entente, Spain and the remaining European countries follow in a quite general way, but Holland is singled out in a somewhat conspicuous manner. In respect of Britain, America and Spain, "democracy" is especially mentioned as a unifying factor.

*Re (6) Germany:*

Noteworthy is the emphasis placed on the fact that the French Left-wing intends to continue to champion German-French understanding, as it had always done—a statement designed not only for foreign but also for home consumption. Incidentally, this section, on the one hand, does not mention the pact with Russia at all although this has been the prime cause of tension between Germany and France, yet, on the other hand, it also completely omits delicate issues such as the fortification of the Rhineland. Since readiness in principle to come to an understanding is tied to the condition that this understanding must come about on

<sup>6</sup> The Treaty of Mutual Assistance between France and the Soviet Union with Protocol of Signature, signed in Paris on May 2, 1935; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXVIII, pp. 395–406.

<sup>7</sup> See vols. III and IV of this Series, *passim*.

the basis of indivisible peace, this demand should in the first place no doubt be taken to mean that the peace system proposed by Germany must not be allowed to affect the play of the French alliances, or—as the French put it—that the non-aggression pacts proposed by Germany must be built into the Covenant of the League of Nations. Noteworthy is the passage stating that since March 7 “*la situation demeure sérieuse*”.

*Re (7) Disarmament:*

The promulgation of the thesis that the arms race will lead to war, and the demand for a resumption of the disarmament conference are old items on Léon Blum's programme. In this connection the mention of the ex-service-men's associations, who “are today united in fraternal union regardless of frontiers”, is worthy of note.

In the statements on the Air Pact two points deserve attention: On the one hand the demand that it should be supplemented by an agreement limiting air armaments but, on the other hand, also the admission that such an agreement on limitation might embrace all the air forces of Europe.

*Re (8) Study Committee:*

To the proposal to convene the European Study Committee<sup>8</sup> for the purpose of investigating economic questions is added the special remark that Germany, even though not a member of the League of Nations, could participate.

*Re (9) The French Armed Forces, and the closing observations:*

Apart from the self-evident thesis that France cannot disarm so long as the arms race continues, this section contains a proclamation in general terms of French aims for mankind and for peace, in which the possibility of a “development under the guidance of international justice and morality” is nevertheless mentioned, which indicates a slight lessening of the denial in principle of any possibility of change.

RINTELEN

<sup>8</sup> i.e., the Commission of Enquiry for European Union, which had been established, upon the proposal of the then French Foreign Minister, Aristide Briand, by a resolution of the League of Nations Assembly of Sept. 17, 1930. This Commission had not met since 1932.

## No. 415

1744/402809

*The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 81

VIENNA, July 1, 1936—2:10 p.m.

Received July 1—3:45 p.m.

Pol. IV 1184.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

The Federal Chancellor informed me that he had declined a pressing invitation from Eden, Delbos and Blum to go to Geneva,<sup>1</sup> as well as a second invitation to Montreux.<sup>2</sup> He fears that it is desired to frustrate the process of reconciliation with Germany and, in addition, to exert pressure on the trend towards the Left in Austria. He said he was determined to bring our negotiations to a conclusion and that he would probably take part in the September session of the League of Nations. Regarding the communiqué, acceptance of the sentence about the people's right to self-determination could not be obtained.<sup>3</sup> We agreed on the following formula: "In accordance with the statements made by the Führer and Chancellor on May 21, 1935, the Government of the German Reich recognize the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria, which the latter is resolved to uphold on all sides."<sup>4</sup>

By means of the addition proposed by me sovereignty will at least be defended in respect of third parties and of the Treaty of St. Germain as well. To Point 3 the Federal Chancellor wishes to add the sentence relating to the Rome Protocols from the Gentleman [*sic*] Agreement.<sup>5</sup> The rest remaining unchanged. Minor amendments only have been proposed for the Gentleman [*sic*] Agreement. The written text follows by today's courier.<sup>6</sup> I would request a reply by telegram

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 410. In telegram No. 45 of July 1 (3254/E000798-99) Krauel reported from Geneva that, although the idea of Schuschnigg's coming to Geneva had been abandoned apparently owing to Italian influence, there was no doubt that Delbos and Eden had exhaustively discussed the situation in Austria.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 407.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "That is worse than all the previous formulae." See also document No. 423.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 401, enclosure II, Article VIII(a).

<sup>6</sup> These drafts of the agreement and communiqué were forwarded with and commented upon in despatch A 3554 of July 1 (1744/402810-14; 17-21). This text of the agreement is identical with that marked as signed by Papen [see Editors' Note, p. 755] except that in Section III the names of the newspapers listed have not been filled in, and that in Section IX the heading is missing. The text of the communiqué corresponds *mutatis mutandis* to that initialled by Schuschnigg [see Editors' Note, p. 755] except that, in point 1, the typescript has, after the words "full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria", the words "which the latter is resolved to uphold on all sides". An alternative rendering has been noted in the margin as follows: "and thereby its rights to self-determination (cf. telegram No. 85 of July 3 from Vienna [see document No. 424 with footnote 3 thereto])."

regarding approval of the definitive text. When this is received the Federal Chancellor will conclude the discussions with Glaise [-Horstenau], a memorandum on which he intends to communicate to me in the middle of next week.<sup>7</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>7</sup> The files of the Vienna Legation contain two further drafts each of the gentlemen's agreement and communiqué. Of these, one set of drafts (8678/E607263-67, 73-74) are annotated in Papen's handwriting: "Communicated by the Federal Chancellor on July 1", and have the Austrian and the German proposals for disputed passages set out in parallel columns. In the draft gentlemen's agreement there are three such passages; they are the fourth sentence of Article III, the second sentence of Article IV and the second sentence of Article IX, Point (b); in each case the German version is that contained in document No. 401, enclosure 2, as amended by document No. 408, whilst the Austrian version is that incorporated in the final text signed by Schuschnigg. In the draft communiqué there are also three such passages. They occur in Point 1 where the Austrian version cites *verbatim* Hitler's words that "Germany neither intends nor wishes to interfere in the internal affairs of Austria, to annex Austria or to conclude an *Anschluss*" and continues: "the Government of the German Reich recognize the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria and therewith its right to self-determination", whilst the German version omits the direct quotation from Hitler's speech and concludes "... recognize the sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria, to whose people belongs, as to other peoples, the right of free self-determination" (handwritten notes by Papen include the amendment of this phrase to read as in the document here printed); in Point 2, where the Austrian version corresponds to the final text as initialled by Schuschnigg and the German reads as in document No. 401, enclosure 1, Point II, second sentence; in Point 3 where the Austrian version has the additional sentence concerning the Rome Protocols, as reported in the document here printed.

The other set of drafts (8678/E607268-72, 75-76) are annotated in Papen's handwriting: "Text sent to the F[oreign] M[inistry] after the conversation of July 1 with the F[ederal] C[hancellor]." They have in places been subsequently amended by hand to correspond with the final versions. At the foot of the draft communiqué is a marginal note: "Vienna.II.VII.36.Initial."

## No. 416

5846/E426543-44

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 128 of July 1

LONDON, July 1, 1936.

Received July 2—10:45 a.m.

Pol. II 728.

For the Foreign Minister and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff personally.

Yesterday I had an interesting conversation with Mr. Granville,<sup>1</sup> the Parliamentary Private Secretary to Sir John Simon,<sup>2</sup> who spoke approximately as follows:

Every aspect of British foreign policy today lacked clear leadership and direction, which explained the confusion of the last few weeks. He could assure me that for all the fond glances certain circles were

<sup>1</sup> Edgar L. Granville, Liberal National M.P. for the Eye division of Suffolk.

<sup>2</sup> Secretary of State for Home Affairs.



casting at France there was no question of an Anglo-French alliance. A large majority of the Cabinet were opposed to it and the Parliamentary debates on Duff Cooper's speech<sup>3</sup> showed that Parliament was not to be won for it either. Duff Cooper's speech, which had been submitted to Eden, was intended "to give a pat on the shoulder"<sup>4</sup> to France, whose weak Government needed strengthening where foreign policy was concerned. Only, the wrong man had been chosen for the job and, swayed by his personal inclinations, he had gone too far. As Granville had often told me before, Britain would not conclude an alliance with either France or Germany, but was at pains to maintain good relations with both States. Where Germany was concerned, he was convinced that, if Germany were willing, Britain would make every effort to establish friendly relations with Germany. At the same time she would, however, progressively increase her own armaments so that, in the event of an understanding not being reached with Germany, she would herself be strong.

The British Government were fully aware of Britain's present weak military position and they were convinced that it would be at least four years before the necessary military strength would have been reached through rearmament. Last autumn Britain had been bluffing Italy, militarily speaking, and if Italy had acted in earnest in the Mediterranean, Britain would have been in a critical position. As Britain's position in the Mediterranean was not materially stronger even now, anxiety was felt here about the possibility of a German-Italian alliance which, in view of the present weakness of France, would establish a dominant North-South bloc in Europe. Germany was, therefore, unquestionably in a strong position today and the Führer could, by repeating his proposals for peace, gain the leadership of European politics.

The weakness of Baldwin's Government in the realm of domestic policy was becoming more and more apparent and he did not, therefore, think it impossible that Baldwin would already withdraw during Parliament's autumn recess, in order, probably, to make way for Neville Chamberlain. This would probably result in the reorganization of the Cabinet, with the possible return of Samuel Hoare<sup>5</sup> to the post of Foreign Secretary and the inclusion of Winston Churchill in the Cabinet to speed up the process of rearmament. Simon, too, had come markedly to the fore as a result of his latest speeches.

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<sup>3</sup> On June 24, Duff Cooper, Secretary of State for War, at a dinner of the Association France-Grande Bretagne held at the Cercle Interallié in Paris, spoke of Franco-British friendship "not being a matter of sentiment but one of necessity". For a summary of his speech see *The Times* of June 25, 1936. Questions were asked in the House of Commons, and the matter raised in a debate on June 29, 1936. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 314, cols. 25-27, 115-174.

<sup>4</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>5</sup> Sir Samuel Hoare had been Foreign Secretary, June 7-Dec. 18, 1935.

I have felt it incumbent on me to forward these remarks of Granville's, with the request that they be treated as strictly confidential, for the reason that he is one of the few well-informed Englishmen who give their views on British politics quite frankly and because I have repeatedly been able to ascertain that his statements<sup>6</sup> correspond in general to the facts. I, too, am of the opinion that, for the time being at least, matters will not go further towards an Anglo-French alliance directed against Germany than the promises, consolidated by the General Staff discussions, to support France against an unprovoked German attack, but rather that the British Government are convinced of the necessity for making every effort to establish friendly relations with Germany.<sup>7</sup>

BISMARCK

<sup>6</sup> The only previous account of a conversation between Bismarck and Granville, which has been found, is dated Oct. 23, 1934; this was forwarded to the Foreign Ministry by Hoesch under despatch A 3777 of Oct. 26, 1934 (5740/H031766-69).

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note on another copy (7672/E547565-66): "As far as I know, Granville was in Berlin with Simon in March last year [see vol. III of this Series, document No. 555]. He is not a prominent figure, but is extremely well-informed. D[ieckhoff], July 2."

## No. 417

C79/C001281-84

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 1, 1936.

RM 550.

Rk 8223 B.

[Pol. I 880.]<sup>1</sup>

The British Ambassador called on me this morning to take his leave before his departure for London. He took the opportunity to ask of his own accord what was the position concerning a reply to the questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> I replied that I had already stated repeatedly that in the British questionnaire we were required to reply to questions which were, as had become especially apparent in the last few weeks, still completely fluid, and on which neither the British Government nor the other Locarno Powers had as yet expressed their views. Quite apart from the fact that we considered the actual communication of the questionnaire as a tactical error apt to hinder the start of discussions which, after all, the British side also desired, the general political situation had not been favourable for a discussion either.

The Ambassador then asked whether we were still prepared for any discussions at all. I replied that this question was rather surprising

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (3610/E026901-03).

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the British questionnaire of May 6: see document No. 313, enclosure.

when the Chancellor had expressly made proposals for a peace settlement.<sup>3</sup> Instead, however, of replying to these proposals the British Government had sent us this famous questionnaire. The Ambassador explained that his Government were by no means so greatly concerned with receiving precise replies to the questions raised in the questionnaire, but rather with obtaining an answer at all, so that they would be in a position to set in train the discussions desired by them. I replied that I thought I could tell him that we would reply to the questionnaire in some way. When this would be, I was as yet not able to say.

I then turned the conversation to the speech which the British Secretary for War, Duff Cooper, had made in Paris.<sup>4</sup> I told the Ambassador that, as he had observed, we had treated the occurrence as lightly as possible in public here. Nevertheless I could tell him that remarks such as those made in the British Secretary for War's speech, in the report I had, raised doubts as to whether the British Government really did desire any *rapprochement* or cooperation with Germany. Moreover the reports from Montreux that Mr. Eden would be prepared to allow the Russians free passage through the Dardanelles and the Mediterranean for their Black Sea Fleet, should this fleet want to move to the Baltic,<sup>5</sup> invited, rather, the conclusion that the British Government were tending to return to the pre-war Entente Cordiale. We should regret this very much. I could, however, say with certainty that we would draw our own conclusions from it and would take such developments into account in the measures we took.

The Ambassador assured me that the British Secretary for War's speech was in no way to be regarded as an expression of British policy, but merely as an after-dinner speech. Hereupon I drew his attention to the fact that the representatives of the British Government had admitted yesterday in the House of Commons that the draft of the speech had been submitted to the Foreign Office and had there been approved, if not by Mr. Eden, at least by the competent officials.

The Ambassador disclaimed all knowledge of Mr. Eden's being prepared to allow the Russian Black Sea Fleet free passage to the Baltic. I told him that no decision had yet been taken about this; I merely wanted to draw his attention to the fact that such a concession would affect the Naval Agreements of the previous year and would automatically set in operation the sliding scale for our naval rearmament provided for therein.

Finally, the Ambassador asked what was the significance of Gauleiter

<sup>3</sup> Presumably a reference to the German proposals of Mar. 31. See document No. 242.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 416, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> Evidently a reference to reports which were commented on in the article "Suspicious Evasions [*Bedenkliche Auswege*]" in issue No. 140 of the *Deutsche Diplomatisch-Politische Korrespondenz* (7506/E540843-46) (see also document No. 431).



Forster's statements<sup>6</sup> and his attacks upon the League of Nations Commissioner. Did we possibly thus mean to bring up the Danzig question? I replied this was not our intention; but that the attitude of the League of Nations Commissioner, who thought it his duty to hold out his protecting hand over the opposition parties in Danzig and thus to prevent any internal pacification in Danzig, had occasioned this public statement by Gauleiter Forster. M. Lester was, as I had already told the Ambassador last year, in no way equal to his task.<sup>7</sup>

NEURATH

<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 419.

<sup>7</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "1) The Führer is informed. 2) Register in the R[eich] C[hancellery]. 3) To Counsellor Röhrecke for information. 4) To be filed. L[ammers], Berchtesgaden, July 11, 1936."

## No. 418

6976/E521023

### *Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, July 1, 1936.

Pol. I 829a.

Calling on me today, the British Counsellor of Embassy<sup>1</sup> mentioned that the British Naval Attaché<sup>2</sup> here had been instructed by London to discover whether the news about the refortification of the island of Heligoland was true. The Naval Attaché was at present on leave and could not carry out these instructions, moreover he was not very adroit and would probably cause considerable annoyance by putting a question of this sort. For this reason he [Newton] wanted to submit this question to us, so that when the Naval Attaché returned from leave he could give him the answer to forward to London. Mr. Newton thought that presumably our answer would be that it was quite true that we were fortifying Heligoland, this being Germany's sovereign right and no one else's concern.

I told Mr. Newton that I was not informed of how this matter stood and that I would make enquiries. As he went on to say, the British Government are interested in obtaining a speedy reply because several questions on this subject have been asked in the House of Commons.<sup>3</sup>

Herewith to Senior Counsellor Woermann; please discuss.

DIECKHOFF<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> B. C. Newton.

<sup>2</sup> Captain Muirhead-Gould, R.N.

<sup>3</sup> On June 22 and 24, 1936. See *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 313, cols. 1411 and 1743.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes on another copy (6976/E521024-25): (i) "[To] Dir[ector] Pol[itical] Department]. We shall probably tell the British in reply to this question that we claim the fortification of Heligoland as our sovereign right, and will undertake such fortification if we consider it necessary. N[eurath], July 1." (ii) "To Senior Counsellor Woermann."



## No. 419

1675/394987-90

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain and the  
Legation in Eire*

Cipher Letter

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, July 1, 1936.

Pol. V 1360.

Contrary to the usual practice when German warships visit the Free City of Danzig, the Commander of the cruiser *Leipzig*<sup>1</sup> which this year visited Danzig from June 25 to 28, on instructions did not call on the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig, Mr. Seán Lester.

The Polish Government were informed confidentially by the German Embassy in Warsaw on the occasion of the communication of the programme agreed in Danzig for the cruiser's visit, in which a visit by the Commander of the *Leipzig* to the High Commissioner was still envisaged, that the Commander had received instructions not to call upon the League of Nations High Commissioner in order to avoid tactless incidents similar to those which occurred during the visit of the battleship *Admiral Scheer* to Danzig in August 1935;<sup>2</sup> on this occasion the High Commissioner, when he gave a reception for the German officers, had ostentatiously invited leaders and members of the Danzig opposition parties.

In order to prevent possible misconstructions being placed by the public on the fact of the omission of the visit, the following report was issued by the Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro in Danzig on June 25, 1936:

"On the occasion of the arrival of the German cruiser *Leipzig* in Danzig, the otherwise customary official visit by the Commander to the High Commissioner of the League of Nations was omitted.

"This will have been occasioned by something that happened at the time of the last German naval visit to Danzig in 1935. On that occasion the League of Nations High Commissioner invited, besides the German officers, also, amongst others, representatives of those circles

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<sup>1</sup> Captain (Navy) Schenk.

<sup>2</sup> The *Admiral Scheer* visited Danzig Aug. 30-Sept. 2, 1935.

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Please discuss. D[ieckhoff], July 2." In a memorandum for Dieckhoff of July 2 (6976/E521026) Woermann noted information from Captain Ciliax of the High Command of the Navy that the re-fortification of Heligoland was going on so openly that he was sure that the British intelligence service were fully informed; Ciliax therefore had no objections to an affirmative reply. A marginal note on this memorandum reads: "The R[eich] C[hancellor], with whom I discussed the matter, declared that the [question about the] fortification of Helig[oland] should be answered and reference made to the sovereignty of the Reich. A denial is out of the question. v[on] N[eurath], July 3." In a memorandum of July 6 (6976/E521028) Dieckhoff recorded that he had given a reply in this sense that day to Newton.

who make it their business to conduct the campaign against present-day Germany and particularly against the Führer and Commander-in-Chief of the Wehrmacht, namely the Jewish-Marxist opposition and also a former President of the Senate who was removed from office."

This circumstance, taken in conjunction with an article by the Gauleiter of the NSDAP in Danzig, Forster (copy enclosed herewith),<sup>3</sup> has caused a considerable public sensation in Poland. A section of the Polish press, namely the opposition press, have endeavoured to exploit the episode to further their own ends and to represent it as a threatening phenomenon, behind which they sense further hidden German designs in respect of Danzig. On the other hand the pro-Government papers, led by the *Gazeta Polska*, have taken the view that in matters of an international character only statements by official Danzig authorities can be considered definitive, and that the fact that the cruiser's Commander omitted to call upon the High Commissioner, with its implied political demonstration, is a matter which in the first place concerns merely Berlin and Geneva, but does not at the moment affect Polish interests.

Meanwhile Mr. Lester has been asked to come to Geneva by Mr. Eden, the *rapporteur* for Danzig questions in the League of Nations.

#### *Addition for Dublin*

Should you be approached about this matter at your end, you should express yourself in the sense of the above DNB report which makes it self-evident that the episode cannot be regarded as a German-Irish [*sic*]<sup>4</sup> affair. I would add for your confidential information that the way in which Mr. Lester is continually meddling in questions of internal Danzig politics has influenced this decision.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Not reprinted (1675/394981-82).

<sup>4</sup> On another copy (2371/D495787-89) this has been amended by hand to read "German-Polish".

<sup>5</sup> Copies were also sent to the Embassies in Rome and Paris, and the Consulate in Geneva.

## No. 420

2882/565251-52

*The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Switzerland*

BERLIN, July 1, 1936.  
zu Pol. II 307,<sup>1</sup> Ang. II.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor v. Rintelen.

Subject: The banning of the national and regional organizations  
[*Landesleitung und Kreisleitung*] of the NSDAP in Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

In the matter of the banning of the national and regional organizations of the NSDAP in Switzerland you should, on the first occasion which you consider opportune, inform Federal Councillor Motta that we have not sent a Note in reply to the Swiss Note of February 28, 1936,<sup>3</sup> as it did not appear to us that a continuation of such an exchange of Notes promised to lead to any practical results. Naturally, however, it should not be concluded from the absence of a German Note in reply that we regard as tolerable the situation which has arisen as the result of the Swiss action or that we have allowed the Swiss arguments to persuade us to abandon our point of view, of which the Swiss Government must be well aware. You should not, however, go deeper into this subject at present. But instead you should reserve the right to bring the subject up again with M. Motta at an appropriate time.<sup>4</sup>

You should report on M. Motta's reception of your statements.<sup>5</sup>

By order:  
D[IECKHOFF]<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pol. II 307 is not printed (2882/565248-50). This is a memorandum by Rintelen, dated June 9, on a discussion in Renthe-Fink's office on June 4 with two representatives of the AO on future policy regarding the banning of the NSDAP national and regional offices in Switzerland. The Foreign Ministry held the view that some form of response to the Swiss Note of Feb. 28, 1936 (see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 595 and footnote 1 thereto) was indicated, whilst the representatives of the AO stated that, to the best of their knowledge, the Führer had directed that there should be no further exchange of Notes.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 570, 571 and 595.

<sup>3</sup> See footnote 1 above.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "To be submitted before despatch to the Foreign Minister for approval." (ii) "Has been submitted to the Foreign Minister. Ko[tze], [June] 30." (iii) "Note: The instructions to Berne are based on a conversation between the Foreign Minister and the Führer and Chancellor on June 17. Minister Fr[eilich] v. Weizsäcker has already been informed orally in this sense during his stay in Berlin last week. The AO (Herr Fischer) has been informed about the despatch by Herr v. Rintelen. W[ormann], June 30." No record of Neurath's conversation with Hitler has been found.

<sup>5</sup> In report A 1324 of July 11 (3823/E043692) Weizsäcker stated that he had that day carried out his instructions with Motta.

<sup>6</sup> The AO was informed of the substance of the present document by a communication of July 1 (2882/565252-53).

## No. 421

1683/395969

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2690

LONDON, July 1, 1936.

Pol. I 850.

[SK 149.]<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Conversation with Sir Robert Craigie about the Anglo-Russian naval conversations.

With reference to my report A 2593 of June 24.<sup>2</sup>

Sir Robert Craigie, who lunched with me yesterday, told me, with regard to the Anglo-Russian naval conversations, that the Russians' chief interest was concentrated in the Far East and that all the provisions of the Naval Treaty accepted by the Russians had therefore been accepted on condition that Japan too abided by these provisions. As, however, Russia had no very considerable naval installations, dock-yards and so on, in the Far East, the expansion of the Russian Far Eastern Fleet would involve, for the most part, submarines, which would be assembled out there, and smaller vessels.

With regard to the Russian Black Sea Fleet and the current negotiations on the re-fortification of the Dardanelles, Sir Robert Craigie expressed the opinion that other Powers need have no misgivings about Russia's possible right of free passage through the Dardanelles for her Black Sea Fleet. If this fleet were to be confined to the Black Sea the only result would be that the Russians would expand their Baltic Fleet all the more.

With regard to the Russian demands for "A"-class cruisers, Sir Robert Craigie told me that this point had not yet been clarified at the negotiations; the Russians claimed the right to build such cruisers and it would be difficult to deny them this right, since the other Powers also possessed cruisers of this kind.<sup>3</sup>

BISMARCK

<sup>1</sup> See footnote 3 below.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 402.

<sup>3</sup> The copy of the document here printed forwarded to the Naval High Command under a cover note of July 3 (7790/E562698-99) was registered as SK 149; it bears the following marginal notes: (i) In Raeder's handwriting at the head of the document: "Craigie is pulling the wool right over Bismarck's eyes, he is becoming more and more demanding. It is necessary that the German Embassy in London should be enlightened. Draw up a document in which our interests are set forth: submit it to me at once after my return, for discussion with v. R[ibbentrop]." (see also document No. 459). (ii) In Raeder's handwriting against paragraph 2: "They can of course have cruisers and capital ships built in Britain for example." (iii) Against paragraph 3: "The USSR is thus bringing the building holiday to naught. M[össel], July 8." (iv) (commenting on (iii)) "It is all the more necessary to refer Britain to the consequences to be drawn from this by us, so as at the same time to have a lever against R[ussia]. C[iliax]."



## No. 422

3610/E026899-900

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 49 of July 1

GENEVA, July 2, 1936—00:30 a.m.

Received July 2—3:30 a.m.

Pol. I 846.

For the assessment of today's speech by Blum<sup>1</sup> the following statements made by the French State Secretary, Viénot,<sup>2</sup> this afternoon in conversation with Dr. Clauss (*Dienst aus Deutschland*)<sup>3</sup> are of importance:

(1) Blum's speech was primarily designed to bring about the limitation of armaments as quickly as possible. Hence the marked reference to Britain's armaments and above all the appeal to Germany, whose silence and armament are causing Blum anxiety.

(2) Blum's urgent desire was to get into conversation with Germany and in doing so let the past rest so as to come to an understanding for the future, above all about securing peace as the real precondition underlying the armaments question. The French side therefore did not expect a detailed reply from Germany to the British questionnaire,<sup>4</sup> but wished to leave it entirely to Germany's discretion what manner she should choose of intimating her readiness to take part in further discussions amongst the Locarno Powers. In this sense Blum's speech was to be understood as a last appeal to Germany which was, however, made entirely in the spirit of a desire for understanding.

(3) For this reason it had been decided at yesterday's discussion between Blum, Eden and van Zeeland<sup>5</sup> to address no further enquiry to Germany in connection with a reply to the questionnaire but merely to cause Berlin to be informed that it had been decided to continue the Locarno discussions in a certain place and at a certain date in the hope that, in the meanwhile, a German reply would ensue which would make possible Germany's participation in the negotiations. According to Viénot the venue for the discussions had not yet been fixed yesterday, but this evening Brussels is being spoken of quite definitely as the venue for negotiations. Deciding on the date for the proposed meeting of the Locarno Powers now depends, according to Viénot, only on the British referring home to London, though, on the other

<sup>1</sup> For the text of Blum's speech of July 1 to the Assembly of the League of Nations see League of Nations: *Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, Special Supplement No. 151, pp. 27-30.

<sup>2</sup> Pierre Viénot, French Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>3</sup> German news agency.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> See also Editors' Note, p. 727.

hand, the date might perhaps still be affected by the receipt of a German reply. Should there be no prospects of receiving a German reply, the French Government, to their great regret, would be forced to insist on the Locarno Powers meeting in the near future without Germany. In this connection the most varied dates are being spoken of today in Geneva, the earliest being July 16. The British Press Chief<sup>6</sup> this evening confirmed Viénot's statements in substance and spoke without committing himself of July 20 as a possible date and of Brussels as a possible venue for the negotiations.

(4) In the event of conversations with Germany taking place, France would be at pains to let Franco-Russian relations, which were "not the axis of French policy", recede into the background for the time being.

Further to this French interpretation, the Hungarian<sup>7</sup> and Polish<sup>8</sup> Ministers here told me today that Blum's speech should be viewed as a vigorous appeal to Germany to take part in international conversations about the armaments question and about safeguarding peace, and as clearly showing that the present French Government were trying to facilitate German participation as much as possible. According to Minister Velics' view, the opinion prevails amongst delegation circles here that further silence on Germany's part might cause British policy to abandon the rôle of mediator between France and Germany. The possibility of this development in British policy appears to be the cause of anxiety in Polish circles too, in so far as it might have repercussions on German-Polish relations.

KRAUEL

<sup>6</sup> The reference would appear to be to R. W. A. Leeper, Head of the Foreign Office News Department.

<sup>7</sup> László de Velics.

<sup>8</sup> Tytus Komarnicki.

## No. 423

1744/402828

### *The Foreign Minister to the Legation in Vienna*

Telegram

No. 70

BERLIN, July 2, 1936—4:00 p.m.

zu Pol. IV 1184.<sup>1</sup>

Pol. IV 1189.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to your [telegram] No. 81 of July 1<sup>1</sup> and despatch A 3554.<sup>2</sup>

For the Minister personally.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 415.

<sup>2</sup> Of July 1, see document No. 415, footnote 6.

(1) The latest formula on the recognition of Austria's sovereignty seems unfortunate because it blocks for us, as for Austria too, all possibility of an *Anschluss* in future, indirectly as well. In case agreement on the basis of my proposal in telegram No. 66<sup>3</sup> is not possible, you should try to find out whether a return to the first Schuschnigg proposal<sup>4</sup> is possible and, if need be, approach the Federal Chancellor again in this sense.

(2) I am in agreement with the other proposals, including the addition to Point 3 of the communiqué of the sentence regarding the Rome Protocols from the gentleman [*sic*] agreement.

You should report by telegram on the result of your latest conversation.

NEURATH

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 407.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 389 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 424

1744/402829

### *The Minister in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 82 of July 2

VIENNA, July 2, 1936—8:00 p.m.

Received July 2—9:50 p.m.

Pol. IV 1215.

For the Foreign Minister personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 70.<sup>1</sup>

I would request a reply by telegram as to whether the following formula, which the Federal Chancellor proposed during the discussion, is acceptable:

In accordance with the statements made by the Führer, etc., the Reich Government recognize the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria and thereby its right to self-determination.<sup>2</sup>

This formula takes account of your objections.<sup>3</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 423.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Restoration?"

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Answered by telegram yesterday. D[ieckhoff], July 4." Papen was informed of Neurath's agreement to his proposal in telegram No. 71 of July 3 (1744/402830). In telegram No. 85 of July 3 (1744/402831) Papen reported: "The Federal Chancellor accepted all the texts, including the communiqué, point 1, in accordance with my telegram No. 82. He hopes to be able to inform me on Wednesday [July 8] of the outcome of the discussions with Glaise [-Horstenau]." See also document No. 447.

## No. 425

3610/E026904

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 53 of July 3

GENEVA, July 3, 1936—6:10 p.m.

Received July 3—7:20 p.m.

Pol. I 887.

With reference to my telegram No. 44 of June 30.<sup>1</sup>

I learn today from a reliable source the following about the results so far of the Locarno conversations:<sup>2</sup> Delbos has informed the Italian delegates here that as a result of the present conversations between Eden, Delbos and van Zeeland it has so far only been agreed to continue the Locarno conversations between the present meeting of the Assembly and that planned for September. No decision has yet been taken about either the place or the date of this conference. As soon as this has been done, the Italian Government will be officially informed in order to give them an opportunity to participate.

As to whether and in what manner Germany should be informed of the continuation of the Locarno discussions, no agreement has been reached either. It is, however, in any case intended to keep Germany informed. The French are pressing for the venue and date of the conference to be fixed soon, but appear to wish that Germany's participation, which they desire, should not be made dependent on an explicit reply to the British questionnaire.<sup>3</sup> The British on the other hand are hesitating to fix a date for the conference in order not to exert any unnecessary pressure on Germany, but, they are, nevertheless, definitely expecting a reply to their questionnaire in a form which would not detract from their prestige. The attitude of reserve which the Italians are maintaining towards the Locarno conversations has so far in no wise altered. According to the opinion of the Italian delegates here, there is, in view of the attitude adopted both by the French and above all by the British in the Mediterranean question, as it emerged in the negotiations in Geneva and Montreux,<sup>4</sup> no cause at all for the Italians to make concessions to France or Britain in the Locarno question.<sup>5</sup>

KRAUEL

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 412.

<sup>2</sup> See also Editors' Note, p. 727.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 412, footnote 3.

<sup>5</sup> The document here printed was transmitted as a cipher letter to the Missions in London, Paris, Rome and Brussels on July 4 (6719/E509857).



## No. 426.

1744/402832-34

*The Minister in Vienna to the Führer and Chancellor*

A 3583

VIENNA, July 3, 1936.  
Pol. IV 1311.

Subject: Discussion with Prince Starhemberg.

Prince Starhemberg today invited me to come and have a conversation of some length, in order to disclose to me that, in view of the Olympic Games and in the interests of a further *détente* in our relations, he intends to lift the ban on sports.<sup>1</sup>

To this he attached the special request that the German press should not exploit this decision as possibly implying an overture on Starhemberg's part to National Socialism or to the Reich Government. He considered it important to stress that his attitude to the Schuschnigg Government was one of the greatest loyalty.

In reply I told the Prince that I could only welcome the lifting of the ban on sports, and that I would be at pains to ensure that comment in the German press was in accordance with his wish. As the lifting of the ban must be sanctioned by the Cabinet, the Prince will only inform me of it officially in a few days' time. But already at this stage I would venture to request that the German press be instructed to comment on this step as a gratifying result of the further lessening of tension, but without adding any political observations.

When I asked him about his further intentions, Prince Starhemberg replied that he intended to spend the summer in rest and travel, and that he would not again occupy himself intensively with the affairs of his Heimwehr until the autumn. He was glad not to be a Minister any longer as he hated offices and files. Within the next few days he will be leaving once again for an Italian seaside resort.

In the course of the conversation he also asked me about the success of my efforts for a reconciliation, and—as he had previously done<sup>2</sup>—expressed the view that in consequence of the catastrophic trend towards the Left, in France, too, solidarity among the countries having Fascist Governments was more than ever necessary. I told him that my efforts to find a *modus vivendi* with the Federal Chancellor were certainly in line with his own wishes. We were convinced that the Heimwehr would yet have a decisive task to fulfil in the future political

<sup>1</sup> A ban on Austrian athletes taking part in sporting events in Germany or against Germans had been imposed following attacks made by the *Voelkischer Beobachter* on Starhemberg, who was Head of the Austrian Athletic Front. See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 588. The Olympic Games were opening in Berlin on Aug. 1, 1936.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 90 and 246.

development of Austria, and we should welcome it if, once peace had been restored, we could fight for the same aim.

The Prince then asked me why Germany was so strongly opposed to a restoration. He had become convinced that the party-political and clerical infection that was taking hold of the Army and the Civil Service could only be halted if some neutral person—a monarch—were to take over the leadership of the country. He therefore believed that Austria had to adopt this course. When I attempted to make clear to him why a restoration, particularly if carried out in opposition to Germany, would be bound to arouse the strongest antagonism, and that it appeared doubtful to me whether a personality such as Otto could exercise the influence that Starhemberg desired, he said that Otto by no means belonged to the Black [Clerical] camp and strongly criticized political Catholicism.

Our discussion, which was very friendly in tone, left me, it must be admitted, with the astounding impression that Starhemberg too seems to be counting on a restoration. On the other hand I do not think it impossible that, when he re-enters the political arena in the autumn, he might decide to campaign for President Miklas's post. Once pacification has taken place, such a solution, if it were supported by Rome and Berlin jointly, might perhaps form a happy counter-balance to the all too clerical tendencies of the Schuschnigg Cabinet.

PAPEN

## No. 427

1812/414870-73

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Consul Hencke*

A 1389

[Moscow], July 3, 1936.

DEAR HENCKE: With reference to my letter of June 29<sup>1</sup> in which I have already commented on the memorandum concerning the militaro-political repercussions of the Russian Pacts in the South East [European] region (despatch Pol. V 959 of June 20, 1936),<sup>2</sup> I should like to add the following:

I have caused the Military Attaché, General Köstring, to whom I gave the memorandum for his confidential information, to state his views upon it. General Köstring has submitted a memorandum to me on this subject which I feel I should not withhold from you. I forward a copy of it herewith, but would point out that the memorandum was prepared for my personal information. I would therefore venture to

<sup>1</sup> An extract from this letter made in the Foreign Ministry and containing the relevant passages is filmed as 1812/414868-69.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 392.

request you too to make use of this memorandum for your personal information and for no other purpose.

This letter reaches you by the hand of Herr von Herwarth<sup>3</sup> who is leaving for Berlin today in order to place himself at the Ambassador's disposal.

With best regards and Heil Hitler!

Yours, etc.,

T[IPPELSKIRCH]

[Enclosure]

German Embassy  
The Military and Air Attaché

Moscow, July 3, 1936.  
zu A No. 1389.

*Comments on Foreign Ministry despatch Pol. V 959 of June 20, 1936  
(Air Armament in Czechia)*

1. It is not, for the time being, possible to verify from here the statements made in the report.<sup>2</sup> I have learned through the Italian Military Attaché here that the *Italian Attaché* in Prague has been instructed to investigate the Czech airfields in person. He was able to establish that work on extensions was in progress at a few airfields, but no preparations on a more significant scale such as would indicate Russo-Czech collaboration. Nor have my repeated approaches to other Attachés elicited any indications of any kind.

2. I am convinced that agreements have been concluded between the Russian and Czech General Staffs which lay down collaboration. Particularly as regards the employment of the Russian Air Force on Czech territory, military and technical details will undoubtedly have been agreed on paper. On the basis of the collaboration between Germany and Russia in past years (which was, after all, similar) and of my knowledge of Russian behaviour in that connection, I have come to the following conclusions which are contrary to the statements contained in the report.

(a) The putting into operation of the air line between Moscow and Prague need not be expected at present. Enquiries are being made monthly as to its inception and the reply from Moscow Airport has been negative.

(b) That the Czech Government should deny that they are co-operating with the Russians is understandable; it will not be in accordance with the facts. But I cannot believe that Russian instructors and particularly technical personnel are taking any great part in the training of Czech flying personnel and ground staff [*Fliegertruppen*]. It would not be against Russian practice to permit a few, specially reliable, persons to go abroad. But indeed the worth of a Russian Air

<sup>3</sup> Hans Heinrich Herwarth von Bittenfeld, Third Secretary at the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.

Force officer is rated altogether too highly. If Czechia cannot manage by herself she will be more likely to call upon her friend France. It is quite out of the question that there should be hundreds of Russian other ranks in Czechia. Since ordinary people are not let out at all, if only because they might be subject to political influence abroad. The Generals who have been entrusted with the Russian military organization are unknown here.

(c) The resources in material of the Russian war industry are not so great, that they could at this stage stockpile substantial quantities of material.

(d) From the military point of view I cannot imagine that the Russian General Staff would push their most valuable weapon, the bombers, which in wartime can only be replaced slowly and with difficulty, into a strip only a few hundred kilometres in width and leave them to the sole protection of their Czech friends. Still less I believe that they would advance in greater force, with a million-strong army, "by-passing" Poland and through Rumania. After all, in the narrow strip of Czechoslovakia, their further advance would be constantly threatened on one flank by the Poles and on the other by Hungary.

The present deployment of Russian troops with the main concentration in White Russia and the Kiev military district does not, at any rate, furnish the slightest grounds for supposing that the Russians intend to attain their war objective via Rumania.

*To sum up:* The intentions which have often been reported, regarding collaboration between Russia and Czechia in the manner described, *might* perhaps come to pass in future years, although I cannot see how this could be a military necessity for the Russians. At the moment I do not consider that such a necessity exists; a paid intelligence service is bound to take advantage of the present circumstances and to furnish many such reports.

KÖSTRING

Herr Tippleskirch: Submitted with reference to instructions.

K[östring], July 3.

[EDITORS' NOTE. Representatives of Britain, France and Belgium met at Geneva, June 30–July 3, to discuss the Locarno question; they agreed that a further meeting was necessary, and that the Belgian Minister President should issue invitations to the Locarno Powers whose representatives drew up the London arrangements of March 19, i.e., including Italy (see Editors' Note, p. 208). For the text of the communiqué issued on July 3 after their meetings, which was transmitted to the Foreign Ministry by Geneva telegram No. 60 of July 4 (3610/E026905) see *The Times* of July 4, 1936.]



## No. 428

3610/E026906-07

*The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 61 of July 4

GENEVA, July 4, 1936—7:20 p.m.

Received July 4—9:00 p.m.

Pol. I 899.

The British Press Chief<sup>1</sup> has given the following confidential interpretation of the Locarno Powers' communiqué of July 4 (sent in our telegram No. 60)<sup>2</sup> which is forwarded with all reserve.

He said that in the face of opposition from Delbos, Eden had managed to ensure that no date was mentioned in the communiqué for the proposed conference, in order not to exert any unnecessary pressure on Germany. Although the communiqué names as participants in the conference only the remaining Locarno Powers as being the signatories to the Agreement of March 19,<sup>3</sup> the British were determined to invite Germany to attend the meeting, in the event of a German reply to the British questionnaire<sup>4</sup> having been received in the meanwhile such as would render possible a continuation of the conversation with Germany. To the question as to whether the proposed conference was to be held at first without Germany, who was only to be brought in later, the Press Chief gave an evasive reply.

Belgian circles have stated in confidence with reference to the communiqué that July 16 has definitely been envisaged as the date and that Brussels has also been fixed as the venue for the meeting. Nothing was yet known about Italian participation. Should the Italian Government send a representative it was proposed to send Grandi<sup>5</sup> to Brussels. The Belgians were much concerned to have Germany take part and this would, of course, be greatly facilitated by a reply to the questionnaire. The French side were still putting considerable obstacles in the way of German participation and in particular the French proposed to insist that the remaining Locarno Powers should first negotiate by themselves and that Germany should only be brought in at a later stage. The French appeared also to wish to make an invitation to Germany to participate dependent on the form taken by her reply<sup>6</sup> to the questionnaire, while Belgium and Britain allegedly

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 422, footnote 6.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 727.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> Italian Ambassador in Great Britain.

<sup>6</sup> This word, marked as corrupt in transmission, has been pencilled in.

regarded a German reply couched in quite general terms as a sufficient precondition for Germany's participation in the negotiations.

The various reports which are being issued here by the British, French and Belgian sides about the substance of the Locarno conversations confirm the impression that the Geneva conversations have not produced agreement about a uniform attitude towards Germany, even over the procedure for the further treatment of the Locarno question, but that, in any case, a meeting of the remaining Locarno Powers in Brussels is to be expected.

KRAUEL

## No. 429

1723/399527-28

### *Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 4, 1936.  
Pol. V 1623.

Staatsrat Schimmel of the Danzig Senate called on me and told me that he had been charged by President Greiser to inform the Foreign Ministry officially about the course of yesterday's conversations in Berlin and about the impending action with the League of Nations.<sup>1</sup>

He said that in the conversations which took place on the evening of July 2 between Gauleiter Forster and the Führer and Chancellor and then yesterday with Colonel General Göring and then again with the Führer and Chancellor,<sup>2</sup> it had been decided that President Greiser should accept the invitation to Geneva and should take this opportunity to make a fundamental speech about the position of the League of Nations High Commissioner in Danzig. The text of the speech, which had been drawn up here, was thoroughly aggressive. He said it not only attacked Lester himself on account of his interference in Danzig's internal affairs, but also attacked the whole institution of a High Commissioner, the superfluity of which office would be propounded.

Herr Greiser had been charged to discuss the matter beforehand with Colonel Beck. We agreed that such a conversation might possibly still produce a certain amount of alteration of the text of the speech. He said Herr Greiser had also been charged to discuss with M. Beck the question of whether Danzig matters might not constantly be settled directly between Poland and Germany, possibly by setting up a mixed commission. But Herr Greiser was to decide from the course of the conversation whether merely to touch lightly on this question or to go into it more deeply.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 430 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> No further record of these conversations has been found but see also document No. 434.

If possible Herr Greiser was to avoid a discussion with Eden before the Council meeting, which would presumably take place at 4:30 p.m., so that Eden should not put him off his stroke.

I told Herr Schimmel that although I had no instructions, I must on my own behalf express my regret that the Foreign Ministry should only be informed about these events after they had occurred. Herr Schimmel fully understood the position and then spoke of the reasons which he personally thought had led to a loosening of contact with the Foreign Ministry. He hoped that this might change again.

The Danzig representatives will be in Berlin again on Monday<sup>3</sup> and will then presumably also hold conversations with the Foreign Ministry.

WOERMANN

<sup>3</sup> i.e., July 6.

## No. 430

1675/395000-01

### *The Consul at Geneva to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

No. 65 of July 5

GENEVA, July 5 [*sic*: 6] 1936—1:17 a.m.

Received July 6—2:40 a.m.

Pol. V 1469

This afternoon, immediately before his return flight to Berlin, President of the Senate Greiser gave me the following strictly confidential information about his conversation today with Foreign Minister Beck, which appears material to the assessment of the general and international significance of yesterday's debate about Danzig in the Council of the League of Nations:<sup>1</sup>

According to this account Beck opened the conversation by drawing attention to the extreme annoyance of all members of the Council, and especially of those Governments friendly to the League of Nations,<sup>2</sup> occasioned by the President of the Senate's speeches<sup>3</sup> about the general position in Danzig and his proposals for changing it, which were generally viewed as an extraordinarily violent German attack on the functioning of a League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig, with the ultimate purpose of abolishing this institution. In addition Beck seems to have said that this exceedingly momentous German attack (which was also significant from the general point of view of the revision of the Versailles Treaty) on the League of Nations régime in Danzig,

<sup>1</sup> For the record of this debate on July 4 see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, July 1936, pp. 762-769.

<sup>2</sup> In the original the words "League of Nations" have been marked as doubtful in transmission.

<sup>3</sup> Greiser spoke twice during the Council's debate; see footnote 1 above.

had, in view of the general European situation at this precise moment, naturally come as a complete surprise to all the Governments concerned and, to his regret, most particularly to Poland too.

The President of the Senate had said in reply that he too regretted that he had not been in a position to inform the Polish Foreign Minister in advance of the contents of his speech, as he had been charged by the Führer and Chancellor, who had expressly approved the speech worked out jointly by himself and Minister President Göring, to let this attack have the surprise effect of a "bombshell". The Führer had, however, further expressly instructed him to inform the Polish Foreign Minister now that Germany in no way intended to prejudice Poland's rights in Danzig through the abolition of the League of Nations régime in this territory. Therefore he had also been authorized to convey to Beck an invitation from the Führer and also from Minister President Göring to meet for an exchange of views at which common principles for a German-Polish agreement over the future position of Danzig could be laid down.

Foreign Minister Beck had replied that this information had greatly reassured and pleased him. He would fly to Warsaw today in order to report to his Head of Government about the new situation and to obtain approval to enter into the exchange of views proposed by the German side. In passing through Berlin he would inform Ambassador Lipski.

Both parties to this conversation appear to have been of one mind in so far as they both expressed the view that in consequence of the resolution adopted by the Council, whereby Poland is charged on the basis of the present Danzig Statute to settle through diplomatic channels the protocol incident in respect of the recent visit by the German cruiser to Danzig,<sup>4</sup> a prompt visit by the Polish Foreign Minister to Germany would seem quite natural to all observers . . . (group missing) in the guise of this conversation proposed by the League of Nations itself, the much more far-reaching problem of the future of Danzig and its international consequences could be discussed in detail.

President of the Senate Greiser was apparently very pleased about the way this conversation with Beck had gone and at this conclusion to his mission in Geneva.

KRAUEL

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 419.



## No. 431

1833/418742-46

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 133 of July 6

LONDON, July 6, 1936.

Received July 7—8:20 a.m.

Pol. I 956.

[SK 154.]<sup>1</sup>

Under Secretary of State Craigie asked me to come and see him today at the Foreign Office, and, in the presence of the Deputy Head of the Eastern Department,<sup>2</sup> gave me the following information:

During his most recent conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister, Sir Eric Phipps had referred to No. 140 of the *Deutsche Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, "Suspicious Evasions",<sup>3</sup> and the remarks made therein, which alleged that, at the Montreux Conference, Britain had conceded to Russia the right of unrestricted passage for her Black Sea Fleet through the Straits, on condition that the Russian forces, unless employed in the course of a League of Nations' action, would only use the Mediterranean as a through passage in order to be employed in the Baltic and the White Sea exclusively. Phipps further drew the Foreign Minister's attention to the final sentence,<sup>4</sup> which could only be taken to mean that Germany would possibly make the above mentioned observations an occasion for demanding an alteration in the ratio figures laid down in the German-British Naval Agreement. The Foreign Minister had replied that these remarks in the *Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, and particularly the last sentence, had been inspired by himself and that the Reich Government did indeed view the situation with grave misgivings.

Craigie then said that, on instructions from Eden, he had asked me to come and see him in order to inform me that the British Government profoundly deplored this German attitude. The figure for a permanent ratio between the strengths of the two fleets had been laid down in the German-British Naval Agreements. Even though the Treaty contained an amendment clause, it was nevertheless incomprehensible that the Reich Government, before even checking the accuracy of the information they had received, should publish in the press a statement

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the copy in the Naval files (7788/E559221-24).

<sup>2</sup> J. C. Sterndale-Bennett.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 417 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> The final sentence of the article reads: "On the other hand, no doubts should be entertained that Germany will view tendencies, which amount to a diversionary manœuvre at Germany's expense, with the suspicion they deserve and that she might in certain circumstances see herself compelled to include such an 'evasion' with all its possible effects, not only its moral ones, in her calculations."

inspired by them, with an unmistakable indication that recourse to the amendment clause of the Naval Treaty might have to be considered.

The assertions made in the *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* article regarding agreements reached at Montreux were in all respects contrary to the facts. With regard, firstly, to the assertion that Britain had agreed to the unrestricted passage of the Russian Black Sea Fleet through the Straits it must be said in reply that Russia had already possessed this right in full since the Lauſanne Treaty of 1923.<sup>5</sup> The further assertion that the Russian forces were to be employed only in the Baltic or the White Sea was a pure invention. The British Government had never considered anything of the kind, nor had such an idea ever been suggested by any other quarter.

Should the Reich Government feel that, as the result of any measures taken by other Powers, there was a case for invoking the amendment clause of the Naval Treaty, then their proper course must certainly be to begin by approaching the British Government; but if, on the other hand, as in the present case, they were to begin by making matters public, then the whole basis of mutual trust created by the Naval Treaty would be shattered.

In amplification of these statements of Craigie's, the Deputy Head of the Eastern Department gave me the following additional information regarding existing and proposed rights of passage through the Straits. He started by stressing once again that the Russians could not in any way improve their position by means of the negotiations at present taking place, since they already possessed full rights of passage.<sup>6</sup> The current negotiations were being conducted under three heads:

- (1) Freedom of passage.
- (2) Security for Turkey within the Straits.
- (3) Security for the Black Sea Powers.

With regard to freedom of passage, foreign Powers had hitherto had the right to send into the Black Sea a minimum of 30,000 tons and a maximum equal to the strength of the strongest Black Sea fleet in the Black Sea. Turkey now wished her own fleet to be used as the yardstick for the amount of tonnage which these Powers would be permitted to send into the Black Sea. As this [fleet] amounted to 30,000 tons and Turkey wished to admit only half her own strength into the Black Sea, she at present still held the view that a restriction to 15,000 tons should be agreed upon. In the current negotiations there was therefore no question of any restriction upon the movements of the fleets of the Black Sea Powers, which already possessed complete freedom of movement; the negotiations were concerned solely with the proportion of the strengths of the fleets of the non-Black Sea Powers, as these were naturally

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 277, footnote 2.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Ciliax' handwriting on the copy cited in footnote 1 above: "Wrong! The fortified Straits in the hands of a friend alter everything."

unwilling to accede to as substantial a curtailment of their rights as Turkey demanded. In other words, it was desired to maintain as far as possible the *status quo* regarding rights of passage. The negotiations which he had just described referred, he said, to the right of passage in time of peace. In time of war Turkey, if she herself were a belligerent, would be able, after fortifying the Straits, to take any measures which she thought necessary. The situation would be different, however, if, in a war between other Powers, Turkey herself remained neutral. Turkey herself took the view that in these circumstances the agreements applying in time of peace should remain in force. Russia, on the other hand wished, in these circumstances, to close the entry into the Black Sea completely. This the other Powers could naturally not accept, and Britain was therefore putting forward the view that the peace-time restrictions could remain in force for other neutral Powers, but not for belligerent Powers who in such an event would have to be granted unrestricted rights of entry into the Black Sea. After these observations Craigie took over the conversation once again. Apart from the article in the *Diplomatische Korrespondenz*, he drew attention to the numerous reports from the Berlin correspondents of newspapers here according to which there was talk in Berlin of the repercussions of the Montreux conversations on the German-British Naval Treaty. He asked me not to take this matter, of which he himself took a very serious view, too lightly, for he thought it would be unfortunate in the extreme to impair, on the basis of rumours, the foundations of the Naval Treaty by public and inspired statements. To his regret he felt bound to say that it did not appear as though during the last few weeks Germany had been filled with the same spirit as regards the German-British Naval Treaty as had prevailed when that Treaty was concluded.<sup>7</sup>

BISMARCK<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note on the copy cited in footnote 1 above: "Conclusion by C.-in-C.: 'Craigie is keeping up his efforts to intimidate Bismarck.'"

<sup>8</sup> In despatch A2784 of July 9 (1638/390121-23) Bismarck enclosed the text [not found] of the British proposals put forward at Montreux, which Craigie had given him in strict confidence, and reported Craigie's account of the current state of the negotiations at Montreux, where Britain was opposed to the Russian proposal that full egress in time of war should be allowed to the Soviet Black Sea fleet not only when carrying out a League of Nations' action under Art. 16 of the Covenant but also in fulfilment of the Franco-Soviet Pact; Turkey was supporting this proposal. Bismarck concluded: "Although Craigie did not expressly say so, yet I had the impression that the Foreign Office would appreciate it were Germany, invoking the dangers of the Franco-Soviet Pact, to seek from the Turkish Government an explanation of the reasons for their attitude and to express German objections to the grant of a right of passage to the Russians in the event of the practical application of the Franco-Soviet Pact." This document bears the following marginal note: "One might draw the Turks' attention to the fact that they do not make themselves popular with us by supporting the Russian wishes. N[eurath]. July 12." See also documents Nos. 439 and 445.



## No. 432

1650/391906-14

*Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Busse.

BERLIN, July 6, 1936.

zu Pol. IV 857.<sup>2</sup>867.<sup>3</sup>872.<sup>4</sup>900.<sup>5</sup>941.<sup>6</sup>959.<sup>7</sup>1000.<sup>8</sup>

The information, given by the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister to Herr Eisenlohr,<sup>9</sup> concerning the Rumanian Government's intention of concluding a pact with the Soviet Union similar to the Czech pact, is confirmed by more or less similar information furnished by the Austrian Minister in Prague,<sup>10</sup> and by a Czechoslovak General Staff officer to our Military Attaché in Bucharest.<sup>11</sup>

Our Minister in Bucharest was instructed to approach M. Titulescu on the subject of Krofta's information and to ask him, in view of the very emphatic assurances, which have been made repeatedly and in the name of Titulescu, by the Rumanian Minister here, whether Krofta's statements were correct.<sup>12</sup> If this proved to be the case, Herr Fabricius was instructed pointedly to draw attention to the very serious situation which could not fail to supervene in German-Rumanian relations in consequence of Rumania's intention of joining in the encirclement policy against Germany. In any case we should be unable to leave this new turn in Rumanian policy out of account in shaping our own policy towards Rumania.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in (1) Paris, (2) London, (3) Moscow, (4) Warsaw, (5) Rome, (6) Budapest, (7) Belgrade, (8) Prague, (9) Vienna, (10) Athens and (11) Tirana. Addressees 1-7 were referred to the telegram cited in document No. 374, footnote 4, whilst Prague was referred to Prague telegrams Nos. 54 of June 16 (document No. 374) and 56 of June 17 (1650/391887-88).

<sup>2</sup> Pol. IV 857 was Belgrade telegram No. 65 of June 19 (1650/391896).

<sup>3</sup> Pol IV 867 is document No. 385.

<sup>4</sup> Pol IV 872 was Belgrade telegram No. 66 of June 21 (1650/391897).

<sup>5</sup> Pol IV 900 was Bucharest telegram No. 80 of June 22 (1650/391898).

<sup>6</sup> Pol IV 941 is document No. 396.

<sup>7</sup> Pol IV 959 is document No. 397.

<sup>8</sup> Pol IV 1000 is document No. 399.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 374.

<sup>10</sup> Reported by Eisenlohr in telegram No. 56 of June 17 (see footnote 1 above).

<sup>11</sup> Reported by Tschunke in telegram No. 78 of June 21 from Bucharest (1650/391894).

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 380.

<sup>13</sup> Marginal note against this paragraph in Busse's handwriting: "Minute: It will be necessary to include this material so that the Missions get to know our own attitude and learn how the conversations came to take place."



Our Minister thereupon had an interview with Titulescu<sup>14</sup> and an audience of the King<sup>15</sup> and raised this question with them.

I. Titulescu stated with great emphasis that there could be no question of negotiations with Soviet Russia for a treaty which gave Russian troops a right of military passage through Rumania. Any assertions that something of this kind had been agreed with Russia or with France or with Czechoslovakia were false. Rumania would not permit a Russian military passage, partly through fear that the Russians would not leave the country afterwards, but also, and more particularly, because otherwise Rumania would automatically become an opponent of Germany's. Moreover, the military passage of Russian troops would be so long protracted that the German armies would have sufficient time to advance victoriously through Czechoslovakia and to turn Rumania into a theatre of war. It was certainly the case that he, Titulescu, had spoken to Litvinov a year ago at Geneva about concluding a treaty. He had at that time envisaged a frontier guarantee treaty, together with a mutual assistance obligation in the event of an attack. Litvinov had, however, shown no understanding for such a treaty which was why Titulescu's proposed visit to Moscow had not taken place. Later Russia and Czechoslovakia had proposed to him a pact similar to the Czech-Russian pact of mutual assistance. This he, Titulescu, had rejected. He had twice publicly stated that he would not conclude such a pact and had also so informed the Reich Foreign Minister in February 1936 through the [Rumanian] Minister in Berlin. He adhered to this statement. M. Titulescu emphasized that, whatever else might happen, he would in any case stick to it that Rumania should never either orally or in writing grant Russian troops the right of military passage. He could not understand Foreign Minister Krofta's statements to Herr Eisenlohr. Since Litvinov did not want to enter into a frontier guarantee pact the matter was at present no longer under discussion. Nor indeed were the Chiefs of the General Staffs of the Little Entente, who were at present meeting in Bucharest, discussing the question of military passage of Russian troops, but rather that of mobilization in the event of a restoration in Austria. Titulescu described these negotiations as a "children's game" rather than a "war game". M. Titulescu also assured Herr Fabricius that he attached great importance to good relations with Germany and that he adhered to the statements he had made at the time to the Reich Foreign Minister.

II. Most earnestly and on his word of honour as a sovereign King Carol too assured Herr Fabricius that Krofta's statements to Herr Eisenlohr were incorrect. Rumania would not conclude any treaty

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<sup>14</sup> See documents Nos. 385 and 396.

<sup>15</sup> See documents Nos. 397 and 399.

directed against Germany or any other country. Rumania's only treaty which referred to a foreign country was the Treaty of the Little Entente, which referred to Hungary. Rumania wished to conclude a treaty of mutual assistance with Soviet Russia (obviously, therefore, a treaty of frontier guarantee as described by Titulescu too), but he was also offering such a treaty to all other States, including Germany. The negotiations with Soviet Russia were, at present, not making progress. He could not, however, understand why Germany did not realize that a weak Rumania had to seek the protection of a strong Russia. If Germany endeavoured to come to an understanding with France (and in his opinion she undoubtedly could come to such understanding), then Rumania would have no divergences with Germany either. But he would not in any circumstances tolerate Germany or the NSDAP supporting Rumanian Right-wing parties either financially or otherwise.

III. In view of the above it would seem that Rumania is indeed only prepared to conclude a frontier guarantee treaty, although with a mutual assistance obligation in the event of an attack from outside. This view is confirmed by a remark which the French Ambassador made in the Foreign Ministry on June 19.<sup>16</sup> The Ambassador did not deny the news about negotiations for a Rumano-Russian pact but said that such a pact would contain no military agreements. Soundings in Belgrade have produced similar results: The Assistant Minister in the Foreign Ministry informed our Minister that, according to the latest information from Bucharest, the Rumano-Russian negotiations must be regarded as having failed as a result of King Carol's negative attitude.<sup>17</sup> This report is confirmed by an observation made to Herr Fabricius by the Yugoslav Minister in Bucharest.<sup>18</sup>

IV. It is therefore unlikely that negotiations regarding a right of military passage for Russian troops are at present in progress through diplomatic channels. This, however, by no means excludes the possibility that, as emerges from despatch Pol. V 959 of June 20, 1936,<sup>19</sup> on the militaro-political side of the question, the General Staffs of the States participating and interested have examined the question of the form which, should occasion arise (e.g., in view of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations), a military passage of Russian troops through Rumania might take. The conclusions resulting from such study could also be utilized if, under the pressure of circumstances, Russian troops had to be granted military passage for reasons other than the fulfilment of League of Nations obligations.

It is striking that in their conversations with our Minister neither Titulescu nor King Carol raised the question of the fly-over rights

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<sup>16</sup> See document No. 387.

<sup>17</sup> Reported by Heeren in the telegram cited in footnote 4 above.

<sup>18</sup> See document No. 396.

<sup>19</sup> Document No. 392.

for the Russian Air Force, so as to have a link with Czechoslovakia, although, as is known, this played an important part at one time. This may be attributable to the fact either that such an agreement has already been concluded (and in this case the civil air line between Russia and Czechoslovakia as already planned and publicly announced may have served as a basis) or that Russia does not consider such an agreement necessary at all in case of emergency.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

### No. 433

47/31583-85

*Secretary of Legation Bülow to Counsellor of Embassy Völckers*

SECRET

BERLIN, July 6, 1936.

Sent July 14.

e.o. Pol. I 746 g.

DEAR HERR VOELCKERS: Admiral Canaris<sup>1</sup> has asked me to request you to let us have your opinion on the following matter when convenient:

C[anaris] has received a letter from Herr Brinkmann,<sup>2</sup> whom you no doubt know, in which the latter requests him as an old acquaintance to approach the Foreign Ministry and point out that in his, Brinkmann's, opinion the Embassy in Madrid is not assisting him with the necessary vigour and determination. The matter in question is the compulsory registration of a mortgage in favour of the Spanish State and involves the passing over of his own mortgage rights as a creditor in respect of the electric power station in Tetuan; Brinkmann is demanding that, in addition to "routine diplomatic procedure", a direct *démarche* should be made to the Foreign Minister in this matter. I should be very grateful if you would inform Sandro Dörnberg (see below) of the facts of the case as soon as possible so that he may inform Canaris.

If you should be unable to obtain details of this matter from the Embassy files—as I assume you can—then Meyrhofer, who knows Br[inkmann] well, can give you exact information. Canaris' interest in Brinkmann arises from the latter's very valuable cooperation over a number of years in the affairs of Meyrhofer and Krösch!<sup>3</sup>

Solely for information, in case the people involved should approach

<sup>1</sup> Head of the Intelligence Department (*Abt. Abwehr*) of the War Ministry.

<sup>2</sup> Director of the Deutsche Golddiskontbank.

<sup>3</sup> No information on this has been found in the Foreign Ministry archives.

you too, I would further inform you, at Dumont's<sup>4</sup> request, that the latter had a visit from a certain Walter Wagner recently. Wagner told a highly romantic story, according to which Wagner's father-in-law, a Herr Fehndrich, whom you are said to know, together with a Spaniard by the name of Torroba, is negotiating here with a certain Herr Feltjen, said to be an aircraft manufacturer. The negotiations were said to concern weapons for the Spanish Fascists which were to be delivered to Spain by a German submarine. The Ortsgruppenleiter in Barcelona is alleged to have approved the plan. The whole thing probably amounts to some big gun-running deal, if only because, as I have heard from friends of mine elsewhere, Herr Feltjen is said to ply this laudable trade most zealously. Here we have all kept our hands off the affair, of course, and have indicated to the gentlemen that the Foreign Ministry has not the slightest interest in it. It may be, however, that they will approach you as well, or that you will hear something more about the matter.<sup>5</sup> In the latter event, I should be grateful if you would inform my successor, Sandro Dörnberg. (The latter is to step into my shoes on July 15, as I am going to Sofia around the middle of the month as successor to Prince Schaumburg, on which, according to all that I hear about the post, I am to be congratulated.)

With my best wishes and those of my wife to yours, and Heil Hitler,<sup>6</sup>

Yours, etc.,

A. v. BÜLOW<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Head of Political Division III.

<sup>5</sup> See also vol. III of Series D, Editors' Note, pp. 1-2, and footnote 1 thereto which includes part of paragraph 4 of the document here printed.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "Presumably this matter cannot be pursued any further now. Therefore to be filed. Dö[rnberg], Sept. 2."

<sup>7</sup> Adolf von Bülow was the official in Political Division I charged with liaison with the War Ministry.

## No. 434

116/66239-42

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 6, 1936.

President of the Senate Greiser called on me today on his return from Geneva. He was accompanied by Staatsrat Böttcher and Landgerichtsdirektor Wohler, who had been with him in Geneva. In addition Herr Woermann took part in the conversation.



I first informed Herr Greiser about the *démarches* made this morning by the British Chargé d'Affaires and the French Ambassador (see separate memoranda).<sup>1</sup> In doing so I stressed that in these conversations I had naturally supported Danzig to the full.

Herr Greiser then gave an account of the happenings in Berlin and Geneva. He began by expressing his regret that the Foreign Ministry had not been brought into the conversations in Berlin<sup>2</sup> and that in view of the lack of time it had not been possible for him to inform the Foreign Ministry in advance either. Moreover it had not been possible for the interview with the Führer and Reich Chancellor, which had been proposed for midday on Friday,<sup>3</sup> to take place on account of the Führer's engagements. Colonel General Göring had, however, himself obtained the Führer's full approval for the proposed procedure. Greiser himself had only heard about this when he arrived in Geneva.

Herr Greiser then gave an account of the happenings in Geneva which substantially agreed with the reports of our Consulate<sup>4</sup> and those in the press. In doing so he mentioned amongst others the following points: He believed that his performance, however much it had been criticized, would result in the Council of the League of Nations no longer interfering in internal Danzig affairs. His reception by the other League delegates had been more civil than ever before. As far as the incidents were concerned, it was true that when he arrived at the League of Nations building he was at first not allowed in, as he and his companions had had no passes. The report in the press that he had thereupon talked about squadrons of German bombers having to come to Geneva was a lie. But he had certainly given them a very clear piece of his mind, something along the lines that "the Prussians ought to introduce order into this bear-garden". During his speech, he said, there had been continuous noise from the press box, and this had been very markedly repeated at his peroration, when he had stated that he was speaking in the name of the whole German people. The shouts had grown even louder when, as he had always done in Geneva, he had taken his leave with the German greeting. He had then made the gesture described in the press towards the Jewish journalists. It had consisted of shrugging his shoulders and cocking a snook. At that a great uproar had broken out and he had then been surrounded by

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<sup>1</sup> In separate memoranda of July 6 (116/66235-36, 237-38) Dieckhoff recorded that on the instructions of their Governments both the British Chargé d'Affaires, Mr. Newton, and the French Ambassador had called on him that day. Both had expressed concern about possible developments in Danzig and asked for German cooperation. See also documents Nos. 436 and 437.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 429.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., July 3.

<sup>4</sup> The Consul at Geneva's telegram on Greiser's conversation with Beek is printed as document No. 430; his telegram No. 64 of July 4 on the debate on Danzig is not printed (5809/E423689-93).

journalists. Finally the Director of the Information Section of the League of Nations<sup>5</sup> had come up and tried to get him to leave, first by a back entrance and then by a side entrance. He had refused to do either. Finally, as was known, he had left the building by the front entrance.

As to his conversation with Beck, he confirmed the information contained in the telegram from our Geneva Consulate.<sup>4</sup> He had conveyed the invitation from Colonel General Göring and the Führer to Colonel Beck to come to Germany for a German-Polish conversation about Danzig matters. At this conversation Colonel Beck had shown himself sympathetic and when returning from Geneva to Warsaw, as early as Sunday evening, he had four hours' conversation with Colonel General Göring<sup>6</sup> which also appeared to have gone off satisfactorily. During this conversation Beck had promised that he would discharge the task entrusted to him by the League of Nations by sending a note; Herr Greiser assumed that Germany would then reply to this note by stating her views on the personality of Lester, and he thought it possible that in turn Beck, for his part, would ask the League of Nations to recall Lester.

I then asked Herr Greiser if Lester would be returning to Danzig, and whether it had been made certain that in this case he would be afforded full protection and that furthermore nothing would occur which might lead to a conflict with Poland. Herr Greiser replied that he assumed from the course things had taken so far that relations with Poland would not have been impaired but rather improved by what had happened.<sup>7</sup> Naturally, as indeed he had already told M. Beck, nothing would happen which might endanger these relations. Mr. Lester did indeed propose to return to Danzig. He would be able to work quietly there and write his reports to the League of Nations. Naturally the Senate would see he was protected and not permit incidents, but otherwise they would simply ignore any intervention by Lester in Danzig internal questions.

Lastly Herr Greiser mentioned that he now proposed finally to restore order in Danzig's internal affairs. The Opposition would be prevented from any further political activity and the Opposition press would be crushed. He would do this by legal means and the Enabling Law<sup>8</sup> would provide him with an instrument.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>5</sup> M. A. Pelt.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., on July 5, see also document No. 438.

<sup>7</sup> In telegram No. 34 of July 6 (7575/E542889-90) Ambassador Moltke reported from Warsaw that Polish public opinion was greatly agitated about Greiser's speech at Geneva. A marginal note on this telegram reads: "According to this, Poland's approval does not appear to go as far as Herr Greiser thought! D[ieckhoff], July 7."

<sup>8</sup> On June 24, 1933, the Danzig Volkstag had passed (by a simple not a two-thirds majority) an Enabling Law giving the Senate wider powers and authorizing it to issue decrees having the force of law. See also document No. 472, footnote 1.

## No. 435

3610/E026908

*The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 329 of July 6

PARIS, July 7, 1936—[9:00 a.m.]<sup>1</sup>

Received July 7—9:40 a.m.

Pol. I 957.

With reference to your despatch Pol. I 887 of July 4.<sup>2</sup>

With regard to the invitation to Germany to attend the Locarno conversations, I learn the following from a trustworthy source:

After the deliberations in the Council of the League on Danzig,<sup>3</sup> this question had become the subject of further discussion within the French delegation in Geneva. Delbos<sup>4</sup> who, like his entourage, had been much affected by the performance of the President of the Danzig Senate,<sup>5</sup> is said to have again expressed to Blum his doubts about an invitation, since there was a danger that the German representatives would adopt a similar attitude. Blum is said to have replied that this made no difference to him. Previous French Governments had made the mistake of ignoring repeated German proposals for discussions and as a result Dr. Goebbels' statement that Germany had held out her hand so long that it had got cramp had been accepted as the truth by the German people. Blum did not wish to make the same mistake and in view of the fateful international atmosphere was not prepared to accept the responsibility of going down in history as a man who refused to sit at a conference table to reach agreement with Germany. He desired such a discussion, which would achieve a clarity visible to the whole world.

According to this, an invitation to Germany to take part in the Locarno discussions may be regarded as certain even, my confidant added, if Italy should continue to show reserve.<sup>6</sup>

WELCZECK

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Paris Embassy draft (M208/M006634).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 425, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 430, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> French Foreign Minister.

<sup>5</sup> Artur Greiser: see also document No. 434.

<sup>6</sup> Copies of the document here printed were transmitted to the Embassies in London and Rome by cipher letter of July 7 (6719/E509865).

## No. 436

1675/395004-05

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 7, 1936.

RM 563.

The British Chargé d'Affaires called on me this morning and made the same communication to me as he had made to Herr Dieckhoff yesterday.<sup>1</sup> He stressed that his Government were very concerned lest President of the Senate Greiser's performance in Geneva might lead to actions in Danzig apt still further to complicate the general situation, which was already difficult enough. I told Mr. Newton that this concern was groundless; the action taken by Herr Greiser in Geneva had been occasioned by the incomprehensible attitude of the League of Nations Commissioner, Lester, in all Danzig matters. I drew the Chargé d'Affaires' attention to the fact that as early as last autumn I had drawn Ambassador Phipps' attention to the total unsuitability of Lester as League of Nations Commissioner, and the resultant risks. I had repeated this warning in the course of the winter.<sup>2</sup> Lester's position in Danzig was no longer tenable and the sooner he disappeared the better.

Mr. Newton then asked whether there was any danger of Lester's being subjected to any violence in Danzig. I replied that that was quite out of the question. But it would be wrong to conclude from this that Mr. Lester could be quietly left in his post.

In the course of this conversation I also drew Mr. Newton's attention to the fact that I could not understand why Mr. Eden, as President of the Council of the League of Nations, had not intervened against the press excesses. It appeared to me that the press and gallery in Geneva were behaving more and more as irresponsible protagonists, whilst the Council of the League of Nations remained passive. If this were to become the rule it would be a further reason for us to remain absent from this assembly.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 434, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 500.



## No. 437

116/66243-44

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 7, 1936.

RM 564.

The French Ambassador likewise called on me this morning<sup>1</sup> and, speaking on the instructions of his Government, said that it would be desirable for us to exert as moderating an influence as we could in the Danzig conflict, particularly with a view to preventing any developments involving violence. M. Ponçet then observed, with a somewhat ironic air, that he had further been instructed to request us to treat as favourably as possible the commission entrusted to the Polish Government by the Council of the League of Nations to settle amicably the incident on the occasion of the visit of the cruiser.<sup>2</sup>

Concerning the reasons that had led to President of the Senate Greiser's performance at Geneva, I gave the French Ambassador the same information as I had given the British Chargé d'Affaires. In any case M. Ponçet appeared inclined not to take the affair too tragically and merely observed that the fact that the Danzig question had been brought up at this precise moment would justify those of his compatriots who, after the occupation of the Rhineland, had always said that Danzig would next be occupied by us and then Austria would be forced into an *Anschluss*. I told him he knew very well that we did not desire any forcible solution of this question, but that we took leave where abuses existed openly to call them by their true name and to endeavour to have them removed. This was the case in respect of the League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig and it would in any case be wise not to put off removing the causes of the complaints until they were cleared away by an explosion.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 434, footnote 1, and 436.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 419 and 430, with footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 438

116/66245

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 7, 1936.

RM 566.

Minister President Göring this morning told me the following about his conversation with Polish Foreign Minister Beck<sup>1</sup> on the latter's way back from Geneva. M. Beck had told him that in the circumstances he had not been able to do other than accept the commission assigned to him by the Council of the League of Nations,<sup>2</sup> namely to raise in Berlin the matter of the omission of the visit of the Commander of the cruiser *Leipzig* to the League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig. He intended, however, to settle the matter in such a way that the note which was to be sent to us should first be discussed with us here, so that we could then formulate our reply accordingly. Furthermore, he had told all the authorities in Geneva that he would not allow himself to be driven into any dispute with Germany in this matter and that he would try to minimize the whole affair as much as possible.

It appears that M. Beck maintained a rather reserved attitude regarding a possible change in the Danzig Statute and in the position of the High Commissioner.

V. N[EURATH]

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<sup>1</sup> On July 5; see also document No. 434.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 419 and 430, with footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 439

1638/390136-37

*The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

TOP SECRET

TARABYA, July 7, 1936.

A 1480

Pol. VII 765.

Subject: The Straits question.

With reference to my report A 1475 of July 5.<sup>1</sup>

The following secret agreements are said to have existed up to now between Turkey and Soviet Russia in respect of the safeguarding of the Dardanelles:

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<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7245/E531640-41); this reported articles in the Turkish press on the Montreux negotiations and on complaints, voiced in the Soviet press, about Turkey's attitude.

1.) In the event of hostilities breaking out in which neither of the two States is involved, Russia is said to have the right to propose to Turkey that the Straits should be closed; none the less, in this event, Turkey is *free to decide*, i.e., she can also reject the proposal.

2.) In the event of hostilities breaking out in which Russia is a belligerent, Turkey is said to be *obliged* to close the Straits.

3.) In the event of hostilities breaking out in which Turkey is a belligerent, Russia is obliged to support Turkey with mines and aircraft as well as ships, but the latter only within the zone of the Straits.

Cases 1. and 2. would at any rate fit in with the passage quoted in my previous report according to which Russian-Turkish friendship is expected to derive advantages and not to suffer disadvantages from the security which Turkey is creating for herself. Article 9 of the draft treaty submitted at Montreux would also take care of both cases. The informant who made the above statements to a member of the Embassy Staff is often well informed and maintained that he was so in the present case. He has however requested that the matter be kept strictly secret.<sup>2</sup>

KELLER

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "To Senior Counsellor Pilger. N.B. Sent to me by Ambassador v[on] Keller. He adds: 'I am treating the report with special care, as the informant fears that if the information becomes more widely known, he will be compromised, in view of the limited number of people who share his knowledge. Only the Mil[itary] Att[aché] knows of it here.' M[inisterial] D[irektor] Dieckhoff has received a copy. E[rdmannsdorff], July 13."

## No. 440

1933/433545-48

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BUCHAREST, July 7, 1936.

zu Pol. IV 2283.<sup>2</sup>

The allegation, which had so far only appeared in the press, that the Rumanian Right-wing parties were being supported—indeed very heavily supported—with funds from Germany, has now been made to me by King Carol himself, as I have already reported in my telegram No. 81 of June 23.<sup>3</sup> The King told me most gravely that he would in no circumstances tolerate interference of this kind in Rumanian affairs. When I protested that I did not think such funds were being supplied,

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<sup>1</sup> The author of the document here printed was evidently Fabricius, cf. document No. 492 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 498, with which the document here printed was filed.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 397.

as it was contrary to our principles to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, the King said that he already had definite proofs. The funds did not come from official quarters but from the Party and since Party and Reich were one he was forced to hold the Reich Government responsible. The King stated that this propaganda had been the reason why he had had the former representative of the *Völkischer Beobachter*, Herr Weber, expelled.<sup>4</sup>

It is rumoured, and has reached my ears through various channels recently, that these alleged funds get here via two persons, namely, M. Nae Ionescu and M. Radu Lecca.

1) M. Nae Ionescu, a University Professor, has close connexions with the Iron Guard<sup>5</sup> and has previously acted as an intermediary between that organization and the King. He is reputedly about to resume this function shortly as the King, according to Ionescu, supposedly desires the incorporation of the Iron Guard into the National Front. Whether this is really the case remains to be seen.

Titulescu has, before witnesses, remarked of Nae Ionescu that he was in the service of Germany and was receiving one million Lei (25,000 Marks) a month. Report has it that he has even larger amounts at his disposal, especially for subsidizing the Right-wing press, as well as, allegedly, for the setting-up of a modern printing works where all Right-wing newspapers are to be printed. People here consider this to some extent confirmed by the fact that not long ago he bought a particularly magnificent supercharged Mercedes car and is having a large villa built for himself.

His name hardly ever appears in the press and then is mentioned only here and there, at any rate not nearly as frequently as that of the second, namely,

2) Radu Lecca: His name is brought up whenever there is any mention of the alleged supply of funds from Germany. The Tsarans [Peasant Party] maintain that on one of his return journeys from Germany they ascertained that he had a considerable sum of money on him. A leader of the Christian National Party has said that at one time Lecca had promised him a subsidy of seventy million Lei (one million *pro Gouvernement*) if the Goga-Cuza<sup>6</sup> fusion materialized. An informant maintains that he overheard Lecca himself complaining indignantly that the younger Cuza had used two sums of 500,000 Lei each, which Lecca had given him for staging the two large demonstrations in Chişinău and Cernăuţi, to build his new villa.

When M. Lecca was asked where he got the funds from—according to

<sup>4</sup> See also vol. iv of this Series, document No. 478, footnote 2.

<sup>5</sup> Rumanian fascist party.

<sup>6</sup> Professor Cuza, leader of the National Christian Defence League, had joined forces with Octavian Goga, leader of the National Agrarian Party, in July 1935, to form a united National Christian party with strong nationalist and anti-Semitic leanings.



my informant—he pulled out a contract with the *Völkischer Beobachter* under which he was entitled to a sum of 160,000 Lei a month as a correspondent. M. Lecca added that although he had never sent an article to the *Völkischer Beobachter* he could by this means prove at any time that the funds came to him legally. Apart from this he also had a contract with a large German firm—whose name my informant could not supply—whereby M. Radu Lecca was entitled to 180,000 Lei.

M. Lecca gave another informant these figures as his monthly “legal” earnings:

150 000 Lei from the *V[ölkischer] B[eoobachter]*

200 000 Lei from business interests

350 000 Lei (= 4750 Marks).

Several leaders of the Right-wing parties have spoken very unfavourably of Lecca; many consider him an impostor; some even as an informer. He is accused of having brought about Weber’s expulsion in that he—being compromised himself—let Weber pay for his actions. One person went so far as to state openly that Lecca was a great liability to the Christian National Party and directly harmful to the progress of the movement. He urged that all relations with him should be broken off.

All these assertions have certainly reached the ears of the Secret Police, as they have mine, and it is quite possible that it was to these that the King was alluding during my conversation with him.

The ways by which the sums are being transferred I do not know. It has, however, been ascertained here time and again that the transfer of funds is being effected by the illegal way of a private clearing.

By the courier before last, two cases of unknown content, and once before two small cases containing swastikas and other badges, arrived at the private address of Kanzler Blücher.<sup>7</sup> M. Lecca declared himself to be the consignee of the cases which arrived earlier. It would be desirable to ascertain the origin of these cases and I should be grateful for your instructions as to what is to be done with the cases. The question of who is to pay the carriage charges on the cases should also be cleared up.

The accusation that we are interfering in Rumania’s internal affairs by giving financial support constitutes an intolerable burden on our relations with this country and might in particular do us grievous harm with the King. It might also render the position of the German minorities in Rumania particularly difficult.

Somehow a change here must be brought about.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> i.e., the head of the Legation Chancery.

<sup>8</sup> For an account of the activities of the Aussenpolitisches Amt in Rumania see *Trial of the Major War Criminals*, vol. xxv, document No. 007-PS enclosure 2, Exhibit GB-84, pp. 43-47.

## No. 441

115/117434-35

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 8, 1936.

RM 570.

The Lithuanian Minister called on me this morning and first asked me how matters stood with regard to the non-aggression pact with Lithuania proposed by the Führer.<sup>1</sup> I replied that we were still prepared to conclude such an agreement, provided that the Memel affair was settled first. But, quite apart from this, the general political discussions with the Western Powers would also first need to have been set in train.

M. Šaulys then also wished to know whether we had yet thought out in detail the intended agreement with Lithuania. I told him that we had not. When the time came for concluding the agreement, we would be sure to find the necessary formula.

M. Šaulys further enquired about the reply to the British questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> I said that this would be given in due course.

Finally he spoke of the economic negotiations<sup>3</sup> and informed me that these had, in the main, been completed. The German demand, however, that the pig quota should not have to be purchased solely from the Lithuanian Sales Organization was still outstanding. I told M. Šaulys that he had, after all, been aware of this demand of ours from the start. He replied that the Lithuanian Government could not agree to it and gave as the reason the high cost incurred in setting up the Central Sales Organization in Lithuania. In conclusion he said he feared that the negotiations would have to be broken off again, whereupon I replied that I would be sorry, but could do nothing about it.

V[ON] N[EURATH]

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 329 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 442

3610/E026900-10

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 8, 1936.

RM 571.

Pol. I 989a.

The Italian Ambassador, who called on me this morning, wanted to learn from me what Germany's attitude was towards the proposed Locarno negotiations,<sup>1</sup> in order, as he said, that he might then be able to tender advice to Rome. When I countered by asking what was Italy's present attitude towards participation in the negotiations, Signor Attolico said that his Government had not yet come to any decision. I then told him that so far we had not received an invitation to take part in conversations. With regard to our possible participation, this could only be considered if we were informed in advance what was to be discussed. So far neither the British nor the French Government had expressed any views on the Führer's proposals, but had merely sent that ominous questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> Signor Attolico wished to know whether we would welcome Italian participation if we ourselves did not take part in the conversations. To this I replied that in such a case I should prefer it if Italy stayed away, but, on the other hand, if we ourselves took part in the conversations, I would welcome Italy's presence.

Signor Attolico then said he thought the precipitate convening of a conference would be a mistake in view of the generally prevailing weariness and nervousness. I confirmed to him that this was also my opinion, quite apart from the fact that I placed no hopes in a conference without a programme.

With regard to the negotiations on the Straits question at Montreux,<sup>3</sup> Signor Attolico stated that Italy was not represented and would not recognize any decisions that might be reached there.

Turning to the question of the reform of the League of Nations, the Ambassador declared that all the proposals so far made, in particular the regional pacts with the participation of interested parties which had been brought up for debate by France,<sup>4</sup> were unacceptable to Italy. I told him that was also our view.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 727. Italy had received an invitation on July 8, according to press reports. See also document No. 446, footnote 9.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 414.

## No. 443

147/78410-11

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 8, 1936.

RM 572.

On the strength of my yesterday's conversation with Minister President Göring<sup>1</sup> I asked the Polish Ambassador to call on me today, in order to learn from him what were the Polish Government's intentions in respect of executing the commission entrusted to them in Geneva concerning the incident over the visit in Danzig. M. Lipski told me that he had been instructed by M. Beck to talk over with me the Note which the Polish Government would be addressing to us and the reply we would make. The Polish Government thought it expedient that the matter should be settled as quickly as possible and he proposed to send me the draft of the Polish Note as early as today. He would be grateful if he might be informed of our draft reply in order that he might submit both drafts to M. Beck too. As to the contents of the Note, M. Lipski, when questioned by me, said he envisaged a formula which would begin by relating the facts of the case, would then repeat the text of the League of Nations commission to Poland, and would finally request us to state our views.<sup>2</sup>

M. Lipski also mentioned that Greiser's speech<sup>3</sup> had certainly caused a considerable sensation in Poland and that there had been great concern at the announcement about a revision of the Statute.

V. N[EURATH]

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 438.

<sup>2</sup> The draft text of the Polish Note was sent by Lipski to Neurath under cover of a letter of July 8 (1675/395013-17); under cover of a letter of the same day (5809/E423694) Neurath sent Lipski the draft text of the German reply (1675/395011-12).

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 430 and footnote 1 thereto.



## No. 444

3610/E026911-12

*The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 36 of July 8

BRUSSELS, July 9, 1936—3:15 p.m.

Received July 9—5:10 p.m.

Pol. I 995.

I have received the following information about the new Locarno conference from a reliable source which is close to van Zeeland:

It is Belgium's urgent desire to gather all the Locarno Powers, including therefore Italy and Germany, as quickly as possible round a [conference] table with the sole object of concluding a new Western security pact in place of the Locarno Treaty which has been abrogated by Germany. In order to get discussions under way again at all, it is necessary, for formal reasons, to bring to a conclusion the London Conference of March 19 of the four remaining Locarno Powers,<sup>1</sup> which had only been adjourned, as has been already stated in the Geneva Locarno Communiqué of July 3.<sup>2</sup> This is why the first step has been to invite Italy.<sup>3</sup>

(1) If Italy accepts, then the first and only item on the agenda, once the representatives of the four Powers have met, would be to resolve to bring in Germany. There is, therefore, no question at all of the four Powers first agreeing on a programme and then inviting Germany.

(2) Should Italy refuse the invitation, van Zeeland is to call a three-Power conference, but again not to decide on a programme, as this can only be done in common with Germany and Italy, but solely to propose that Italy and Germany be invited together.

There has been no further consultation with Paris since Geneva, in order to spare Italian susceptibilities. Consequently nothing is known here about the latest attitude of the French Government.

Van Zeeland, who is said to be basically in agreement with Eden on this matter, advocated the view that the past, and in particular the questions of military strengths and fortifications in the Rhineland, could no longer be made the subject of discussion and that the sole object of a new Locarno conference should be the creation, as quickly as possible, of a new security system for the West; Eastern questions, on the other hand, would not be for discussion here.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 727.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 442, footnote 1.

## No. 445

1638/390130

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 135 of July 10

LONDON, July 10, 1936.

Received July 11—8:20 a.m.

Pol. VII 740.

With reference to my report A 2784 of July 9.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Samuel Hoare's Parliamentary Private Secretary<sup>2</sup> today likewise emphasized to me that when Britain opposed the Russo-French attempts to secure for Russia the right of passage for her Black Sea fleet in fulfilment of the Franco-Russian Pact, one of her main considerations was to take into account German anxieties over this Pact. From his remarks I gained the impression that there is particular anxiety here lest Germany, as a result of such right of passage being granted to the Soviet fleet by virtue of the Franco-Russian Pact, should demand amendment of the German-British Naval Agreement.<sup>3</sup>

BISMARCK

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 431, footnote 8.

<sup>2</sup> The Hon. William Waldorf Astor, Unionist M.P. for East Fulham.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "My warning has proved effective after all. v. N[eurath]." See also document No. 417.

## No. 446

3610/E026915-17

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2752

LONDON, July 10, 1936.

Received July 11.

Pol. I 1063.

Subject: The British attitude towards inviting Germany to the Locarno conversations.

With reference to your cipher letter Pol. I 957 of July 7.<sup>1</sup>

The impressions I have gained here would also appear to confirm that it is chiefly due to the opposition put up by the British Government that agreement has so far not been reached about inviting Germany to the proposed conversations between the three remaining Locarno Powers.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 435 and footnote 6 thereto.

As I learn from a reliable source the French Government, who wish in any case to get into conversation with Germany, have spoken in favour of issuing an invitation to Germany. The reasons for the British opposition to inviting Germany appear to stem chiefly from the failure to reply to the questionnaire.<sup>2</sup> I have gained the impression from my conversations in the last few days, both with members of the Foreign Office and with other well-informed personalities, that increasing annoyance is being felt here about Germany's failure to reply and that it would be regarded as a loss of prestige for Britain for Germany to be invited to the Brussels conversations in face of her failure to reply. Mr. Eden himself in particular is said to be much annoyed about Germany delaying her reply.

A member of the Belgian Embassy today emphatically drew the attention of one of our Embassy's confidants to this British annoyance and added that the Foreign Office were now almost at the point of adopting the standpoint of the *previous* French Government in that they were pointing out that, after Germany had violated Locarno, the Reich Government had made counter-proposals but that as they had furnished no reply to an enquiry designed to clarify these counter-proposals, the effort of conciliation which Britain had set in train must now be considered to have failed. The Letter[s] which had been exchanged between the remaining Locarno Powers<sup>3</sup> and which envisaged a continuous exchange of views amongst the various General Staffs should such effort of conciliation fail must therefore come into operation. But at the least, the three remaining Locarno Powers must first discuss the new situation amongst themselves in order then to decide in what form to approach Germany. Although I do not believe that the British Government are adopting so crass an attitude, it nevertheless does not appear impossible that certain circles at least in the Foreign Office are toying with ideas of this kind.<sup>4</sup>

In any case it appears certain that nothing definite has yet been decided about the date on which the Locarno conference is to be called and it is suggested that the meeting might perhaps not take place until after the British Parliament has risen, that is to say some time at the beginning of August. In connexion with the invitation to Germany, the Italian attitude will of course also be of decisive importance. Should Italy insist that she will only take part in the Locarno conversations if Germany too is invited to take part, then the British Government might perhaps be prepared to abandon their present objections to an invitation to Germany, in spite of the failure to reply to the questionnaire.

My informant of today further asserted that the French Note to the

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 367.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting: "Perhaps."

British and Italian Governments,<sup>5</sup> according to which France no longer felt herself bound by the Mediterranean Agreement with Britain of last autumn with the object of furnishing support against an Italian attack,<sup>6</sup> had been inspired by Britain in order to enable the British Government to denounce in their turn by drawing attention to the French attitude, the British Agreement with the other Mediterranean Powers for mutual support<sup>6</sup> in order thus to regain the full cooperation of Italy in Europe.

After a conversation which I had with Sir Samuel Hoare's Parliamentary Private Secretary, the Member of Parliament, Astor,<sup>7</sup> this report appears to me to be not entirely incredible, particularly if one relates it to the Turkish attitude at the Montreux Conference. Mr. Astor told me that the Turks attached the greatest importance to being reconciled with Italy quickly, and I therefore assume that Turkey, for her part, would not be disinclined soon to abolish the Mediterranean Powers' Agreement which is displeasing to Italy. That the British Government too are anxious to lessen the strain of Anglo-Italian relations, emerges *inter alia* from the announcement made yesterday of the withdrawal of a section of the British fleet from the Mediterranean,<sup>8</sup> in connexion with which Mr. Astor told me that it was so extensive that the British Mediterranean fleet would be reduced almost to the level existing before the outbreak of the Italo-Abyssinian conflict.

BISMARCK<sup>9</sup>

<sup>5</sup> It was reported from Paris on July 9 that the French Government had made a *démarche* in this sense on July 9; see *The Times* of July 10, 1936; see also the reply by Eden to a parliamentary question, on July 15, 1936, in *Parl. Deb. H. of C.*, vol. 314, col. 2025.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 403, footnote 4.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 445.

<sup>8</sup> On July 9 Hoare stated that British warships which had been sent to the Mediterranean from other stations would be released at an early date.

<sup>9</sup> A marginal note in Dieckhoff's hand at the head of this document reads: "Now superseded by the Italian reply to Belgium." A communiqué issued in Rome on July 11 stated that the Italian Government had replied to the invitation from the Belgian Minister President to Italy to participate in the preparatory meeting of the Locarno Powers shortly to take place in Brussels, by stating that, whilst ready to make a concrete contribution towards safeguarding peace, Italy was obliged to take account of the existence of certain Mediterranean obligations which formed an obstacle to Italy's participation, and further by expressing the view that Germany ought also to be invited to take part in this meeting. See also Editors' Note, p. 761 and Series D, vol. 1, document No. 155.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On July 11, 1936, the German-Austrian Gentlemen's Agreement was signed in Vienna, and a German-Austrian communiqué initialled.

There have been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives a copy of the Agreement bearing Schuschnigg's signature (2871/563833-38), and a copy marked in typescript "Signed: Papen" (1744/402822-27).



The text bearing Schuschnigg's signature reads as follows (differences from the copy marked as signed by Papen are noted where they occur):

*"Gentlemen [sic]-Agreement*

CONFIDENTIAL!

Convinced that the mutually expressed desire for the re-establishment of normal and friendly relations between the Federal State of Austria and the German Reich [the Papen copy here reads: "The German Reich and the Federal State of Austria"] requires a series of preliminary stipulations on the part of the two Governments, both Governments approve the following confidential Gentlemen [sic]-Agreement:

I. REGULATION OF THE TREATMENT OF AUSTRIAN NATIONALS  
IN THE REICH AND OF REICH GERMANS IN AUSTRIA

[The Papen copy here reads:

"OF REICH GERMANS IN AUSTRIA AND OF AUSTRIAN  
NATIONALS IN THE REICH"]

The associations of their nationals existing in either country shall not be obstructed in their activities as long as they comply with the principles laid down in their statutes in conformity with the laws in force and do not interfere in the internal political affairs of the other country, nor, in particular, endeavour to influence nationals of the other State by means of propaganda.

II. MUTUAL CULTURAL RELATIONS

All factors decisive for the formation of public opinion of both countries shall serve the purpose of re-establishing normal and friendly relations. With the thought that both countries belong within the German cultural orbit, both parties pledge themselves immediately to renounce any aggressive utilization of radio, motion picture, newspaper, and theatrical facilities against the other party. A gradual elimination of presently existing restrictions on [cultural] exchange is envisaged on the basis of absolute reciprocity. As far as the sale of works of authors of either country in the territory of the other country is concerned, all restrictions are to be removed, in so far as these works are in conformity with the laws of the country of entry.

III. THE PRESS

Both parties shall influence their respective press to the end that it refrain from exerting any political influence on conditions in the other country and limit its objective criticism of conditions in the other

country to an extent not offensive to public opinion in the other country. This obligation also applies to the *émigré* press in both countries.

The gradual elimination of prohibitions on the importation of newspapers and printed matter of the other party is envisaged by both parties, in relation to the extent of the *détente* in mutual relations attained through this Agreement. Newspapers admitted shall, in any criticism of the internal political situation in the other country, adhere particularly strictly to the principle enunciated in Section 1.

The Austrian Federal Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Austria of the following newspapers published in Germany:

*Berliner Börsen-Zeitung*  
*Berliner Tageblatt*  
*Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung*  
*Leipziger Neueste Nachrichten*  
*Essener National-Zeitung.*

The German Government declare themselves ready to permit, effective immediately, the importation and distribution in Germany of the following newspapers published in Austria:

the official *Wiener Zeitung*  
*Neues Wiener Journal*  
*Volkszeitung*  
*Grazer Tagespost*  
*Linzer Tagespost.*

#### IV. *ÉMIGRÉ* PROBLEM

Both parties agree in their desire to contribute by reciprocal concessions to the speediest possible satisfactory solution of the problem of the Austrian National Socialist *émigrés* in the Reich.

The Austrian Federal Government will proceed to the examination of this problem as soon as possible and will announce the result to a joint commission to be composed of representatives of the competent Ministries with a view to implementing it.

#### V. NATIONAL INSIGNIA AND NATIONAL ANTHEMS

Each of the two Governments declare that within the scope of existing laws, they will place the nationals of the other party on an equal footing with nationals of third States in regard to the display of the national insignia of their country.

The singing of national anthems shall—in addition to official occasions—be permitted to nationals of the other party at closed meetings attended by these nationals exclusively.

## VI. ECONOMIC RELATIONS

The Government of the German Reich, putting aside considerations of Party policy, are prepared to open the way for normal economic relations between the German Reich and Austria, and this readiness also extends to the re-establishment of local frontier traffic [*der Kleine Grenzverkehr*]. Discrimination against persons and areas, if not based upon purely economic considerations, will not be undertaken.

## VII. TOURIST TRAFFIC

The restrictions on tourist traffic imposed by both sides because of the tensions which had arisen between the two States shall be lifted. This understanding shall not affect restrictions based on the legislation of both countries for the protection of foreign exchange.

In order to avoid undesirable consequences, the two countries shall reach a provisional understanding concerning the maximum quotas, which shall be increased from time to time; relatives, persons travelling on business, sick persons, and athletes (especially members of the German-Austrian Alpine Association [*Deutschösterreichischer Alpenverein*]) shall receive preferential treatment as hitherto.

## VIII. FOREIGN POLICY

The Austrian Federal Government declare that they are prepared to conduct the foreign policy of the Austrian Federal Government in the light of the peaceful endeavours of the German Reich Government's foreign policy. It is agreed that the two Governments will from time to time enter into an exchange of views on the problems of foreign policy affecting both of them. The Rome Protocols of 1934 and the Supplementary Protocols of 1936, as well as the position of Austria with regard to Italy and Hungary as parties to these Protocols, are not affected thereby.

## IX. AUSTRIAN DECLARATION ON DOMESTIC POLICY IN RELATION TO THE AGREED *MODUS VIVENDI*

The Austrian Federal Chancellor declares that he is prepared:

a) To grant a far-reaching political amnesty, from which persons who have committed serious public crimes shall be excluded.

Also covered by this amnesty shall be persons who have not yet been sentenced by judicial verdict or punished by administrative process.

[The Papen copy here has the additional sentence: "These provisions shall also be duly applied to *émigrés*."]

b) For the purpose of promoting a real pacification, to appoint at the appropriate moment, contemplated for the near future, representatives of the hitherto so-called 'National Opposition in Austria' to participate in political responsibility; they shall be persons who enjoy the personal confidence of the Federal Chancellor and whose selection he reserves to himself. It is agreed, in this connexion, that the persons trusted by the Federal Chancellor shall be charged with the task of arranging, in accordance with a plan worked out with the Federal Chancellor beforehand, for the internal pacification of the National Opposition and for its participation in the shaping of the political will in Austria.

#### X. PROCEDURE FOR OBJECTIONS AND COMPLAINTS

For the handling of objections and complaints which may arise in connexion with the above Gentlemen [*sic*]-Agreement, as well as in order to guarantee a progressive *détente* within the framework of the preceding agreements, there shall be established a joint commission composed of three representatives of the Foreign Ministry of each country. Its task shall be to discuss at regular meetings the operation of the agreements as well as any supplements thereto which may be required.

SCHUSCHNIGG  
Federal Chancellor"

There has also been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives the text of the communiqué bearing Schuschnigg's initials (2871/563831-32). This reads as follows:

"July 11, 1936.

Convinced of valuably contributing to the general progress in Europe toward the maintenance of peace, and

Believing that the manifold reciprocal interests of the two German States might thereby best be served, the Governments of the Federal State of Austria and of the German Reich have decided to restore their relations to normality and friendship.

Therefore the following declaration is made:

1. In accordance with the statements made by the Führer and Chancellor on May 21, 1935, the Government of the German Reich recognizes the full sovereignty of the Federal State of Austria.

2. Each of the two Governments regard the existing internal political structure of the other country, including the question of Austrian National Socialism, as an internal affair of the other country, which they will influence neither directly nor indirectly.



3. The Austrian Federal Government will, in general, and particularly with regard to the German Reich, maintain a policy based always on the principle that Austria acknowledges herself to be a German State. This shall not affect the Rome Protocols of 1934 and the Supplementary Protocols of 1936, nor the relation of Austria to Italy and Hungary as parties to these Protocols.

In consideration of the fact that the *détente* desired by both sides can only be achieved if certain preliminary conditions are provided by the Governments of both countries, the Austrian Federal Government and the Government of the Reich will, in a series of individual measures, create the basic conditions necessary.

SCH[USCHNIGG]"

For further documents on Austro-German relations see Series D, volume I.]

No. 447

8678/E607282-83

*Minister Papen to Senior Counsellor Kotze*

By Courier

IMMEDIATE  
SECRET

VIENNA, July 11, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON KOTZE: (1) The communiqué in its revised form has been initialled, and the Gentlemen [*sic*]-Agreement signed.<sup>1</sup> I very much regret the deletion of the additional sentence<sup>2</sup> because I feel that it has resulted in slamming shut the door that was open for a change, in our sense and deriving from self-determination, of the form of the State.

(2) The Chancellor will, as arranged, read out the communiqué himself at 9 o'clock and add to it a commentary which, in accordance with the situation, will of course be more detailed than ours. He will invite attention especially to the European implications, and then to the problem of internal political reconciliation in Austria with the National Opposition, announce the appointment of Herr von Glaise [-Horstenau], the amnesty, etc., etc. I would request you to make certain that, for the sake of uniformity, Minister Goebbels too reads out the communiqué and not only the commentary.

(3) As arranged, you will then give the press an additional statement tomorrow regarding the lifting of the travel restrictions and the new

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the clause in Point (1) of the draft communiqué: "and thereby its right to self-determination" (see document No. 424 and footnote 3 thereto). No record has been found of discussions on this omission or of Papen's visit to Hitler, which evidently took place on or about July 6 or 7 (cf. document No. 408 and Franz von Papen, *Memoirs* (London, 1952), p. 369).

regulations, the question of flags and the normalization of economic relations.

(4) Schuschnigg is to exchange telegrams with Budapest and Rome today; he has asked whether it would be agreeable if he were to telegraph to the Führer and whether he could count on receiving a reply. I have made enquiries at Berchtesgaden.

(5) Today's evening press contains the announcement that at 9 o'clock the Federal Chancellor will make a statement on foreign and domestic policy. I have informed you by telephone that I recommend the same for the German evening press.

(6) In view of the atmosphere which prevailed at yesterday's conversations I did not get the drafts prepared for the Minister for Internal Affairs and Hess signed.<sup>3</sup> It is therefore necessary that the Ministers at the head of Departments should be informed forthwith of the contents of the Gentleman [*sic*]-Agreement when the Reich Ministry of the Interior must give an interpretation of the term "local frontier traffic [*kleiner Grenzverkehr*]".

(7) As the text of the Gentleman [*sic*]-Agreement is not to be made public, we have agreed not to publish the names of the newspapers admitted either, but merely to inform them. The *Münchener Neueste Nachrichten* is being replaced by the *Essener National-Zeitung* (as the Party newspaper).

In haste, cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours,

PAPEN

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<sup>3</sup> Not printed (8678/E607258-60, 61-62). These drafts related to the implementation of certain articles of the Agreement.

[EDITORS' NOTE. On July 11, the Ambassador in Rome, Hassell, had a conversation with Mussolini and Ciano in which Germany's attitude towards recognition of the Italian annexation of Abyssinia, the Austro-German agreement, the negotiations on a substitute for Locarno, and the Danzig question were discussed. For Hassell's record of this, see his telegram No. 111 of July 11, 1936, vol. I of Series D, document No. 155.

The full text of the instructions to Hassell, of which a portion is there quoted and which were contained in telegram No. 144 of July 9, 1936 [1744/402841-44] reads as follows:

"URGENT. SECRET. For the Ambassador personally.

With reference to your telegram No. 109 of July 7 [not printed: 1744/402837] and your letter of July 3 [not printed: 1744/402838-40].

For the conversation with Mussolini, the following points arise:

(1) In the Austrian question, as I observe exclusively for your personal information, the internal Austrian negotiations are so far making good progress, so that a speedy conclusion seems possible. In

that case it is intended to publish a German-Austrian communiqué about German-Austrian relations and simultaneously [to conclude] a secret Gentleman [*sic*] Agreement to settle the details of various questions. We assume that Mussolini is being kept currently informed on these matters by the Austrian Government. The danger of a Restoration, even if it is not acute at the moment, remains, in our view, a constant threat (see our instructions of June 20, Pol. IV 825 [document No. 393]); the British Government have, at any rate, replied to our representations on this matter that they do not believe the danger to be acute. The Italian attitude (see your despatch 3124 of June 25 [document No. 404] and your private letter 3283 of July 3 [not printed: 1744/402838-40]) is still not entirely clear here. If Mussolini wishes a German-Austrian settlement, then the simultaneous encouragement of efforts towards a Restoration would be in crass contradiction to it. Mussolini can be told so plainly.

(2) In the Locarno matter, Germany has not yet received an invitation to the Brussels Conference. According to press reports the Italian Government received an invitation yesterday and are deliberating their reply. I replied to the Italian Ambassador, who called on me on July 8 on this matter, that German participation would only be considered if we had advance knowledge of the programme. So far, however, we had only received the ominous questionnaire. To the Ambassador's further question on this score, I replied that we would prefer that Italy stay away if Germany were not invited; that we would, on the other hand, welcome it, in the event of German participation, if Italy were also present. According to what Attolico said, the Italian Government also agree with us that the precipitate convening of the conference, in the present disturbed situation and without sufficient diplomatic preparation, would be a mistake. It is still possible that we shall answer the British questionnaire in some form or other before the Brussels Conference. A decision on this point may be expected soon. [The following deleted before despatch: Perhaps the best thing would be if the German and Italian Governments were to confer again about their attitude to the Locarno conference once a decision has been taken about the questionnaire. This would presuppose that Italy would treat the matter in a dilatory fashion until then.]

(3) In the Danzig question we welcome the placid attitude of the Italian press. We are of the opinion that this question has been unnecessarily played up in Geneva, in order to distract attention from other problems; this caused a reaction in Danzig. [The following deleted before despatch: Of course the German Government back Greiser's statements.] The question of the relationship of Danzig to the League of Nations, as regards both Lester as a person and the office of League of Nations Commissioner, is now up for debate. We



[the following deleted before despatch: as well as Danzig] shall deal with the matter in such a way that it in no way casts a shadow on the German-Polish relationship. Although the Polish Government are undeniably to some extent disturbed, yet the conversations which Beck had with Göring on his way through and the discussions between myself and the Polish Ambassador took a satisfactory course. Concerning the Polish *démarche* with us, which has been decided upon by the Council of the League of Nations, we are (this for your confidential information) in amicable consultation with Poland. The *démarches* of the British Chargé d'Affaires and the French Ambassador, which were reported in the press, were merely designed to cause us to deal pacifically with the Danzig question.

NEURATH"]

### No. 448

1833/418751-55

#### *The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Great Britain*

BERLIN, July 13, 1936.

Sent July 14.

zu Pol. I 956<sup>1</sup> Ang. III

With reference to your telegram No. 133 of July 6.<sup>1</sup>

The British Chargé d'Affaires called first on Herr Woermann<sup>2</sup> on July 4, and subsequently on July 7, on the Foreign Minister,<sup>3</sup> in order, on instructions from his Government, to give an explanation about the connexion between the Montreux negotiations and the German-British Naval Agreement. Referring to the conversations between the Foreign Minister and the British Ambassador, the article in the [*Deutsche*] *Diplomatisch-Politische Korrespondenz*<sup>4</sup> and other German press statements, Mr. Newton said that it was a complete misunderstanding to assume that the negotiations at Montreux would bring about a deterioration of Germany's situation as compared with that obtaining at the time of the conclusion of the Naval Agreement of 1935. On the contrary, as a result of the proposed measures of control in the Dardanelles, the situation would improve in Germany's favour. The Lausanne Convention had accorded the Russian Fleet complete freedom of egress from the Dardanelles and Germany had, therefore, no justification whatsoever for deriving from a corresponding new settlement any claims for an increase in German naval tonnage. On being asked whether the Russian Fleet, when it left the Dardanelles, would be

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 431.

<sup>2</sup> Woermann's memorandum of this conversation is not printed (1833/418740-41).

<sup>3</sup> Neurath's memorandum of this conversation is not printed (1833/418747).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 417 and footnote 5 thereto.



subject to any restrictions regarding its stay in the Mediterranean or its passage to the Far East, Mr. Newton expressly stated, on the basis of his instructions, that all reports to this effect were quite false. The Foreign Minister emphasized in conclusion that his observations to Ambassador Phipps had been made with the object of drawing the British Government's attention to the possibility of special Russian proclivities of this kind. But he had meanwhile seen from the course of the negotiations at Montreux that the matter was settled.

From the point of view of press policy the following should be noted in connexion with Under Secretary of State Craigie's statements as reported in your airgram:

The statements made in the *Deutsche Diplomatisch-[Politische] Korrespondenz* about the proclivities in question, which emerged at the Montreux Conference, were based, as the article expressly stated, on press reports from Geneva. It was all the less possible for Germany to overlook them as other quarters too confirmed the existence of tendencies towards bridging over differences which had become apparent in connexion with the not very welcome presence of a Russian fleet in the Mediterranean and in the Far East, by diverting attention to Germany as the alleged centre of danger. The statements in the *DPC* [*sic*: *DDPK*] clearly emphasized, however, that it was a matter of rumours—albeit significant rumours—and expressly described it as scarcely conceivable that a statesman could take a hand in such mischief making which in *given circumstances* must entail certain repercussions, though these repercussions were in no way more closely defined and therefore did not permit of any concrete conclusions beyond the fact of German disquiet existing.

If it was not even considered necessary to keep Germany, as a naval Power, adequately informed of current developments, or at once to deny press reports which could not but cause her disquiet, then there could be no objection to Germany's giving prompt and appropriate expression to her present anxieties—not demands.

You should, at a suitable opportunity, also tell Craigie that in view of the explanation received we regard the matter as settled, and you could, at your discretion, also make use of the above considerations. In view of Craigie's suggestions that the German attitude to the Naval Treaty has changed, you should state most emphatically that the German Government still continue to attach the greatest value to the maintenance and strengthening of the relationship of mutual trust brought about by the Naval Treaty.

By order:  
DIECKHOFF

## No. 449

1744/402878-79

*The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

## Telegram

No. 75 of July 14

BELGRADE, July 14, 1936—12 noon.

Received July 14—1:30 p.m.

Pol. IV 1500.

The news that Germany and Austria have arrived at a *modus vivendi*<sup>1</sup> has aroused the greatest interest amongst the Yugoslav public. Besides satisfaction over the expected strengthening, at Italy's expense, of German influence in Austria, some anxiety is apparent, chiefly in the press headlines, over the now possible closer German-Italian cooperation.

Minister President Stojadinović, who brought up the matter of the agreement with me today, stressed that he viewed the new situation calmly and with full confidence in German policy. People in Paris were admittedly somewhat agitated. He saw a number of advantages for Yugoslavia. The danger that Austria would become a second Albania had surely been eliminated now. The danger of a restoration, too, seemed to have been reduced. As for a German-Italian *rapprochement*, it was true that Yugoslav public opinion was a prey to anxiety, but he considered it to be exaggerated. When I remarked that I was convinced that our previous political line of refusing to join any combination directed against Yugoslavia, provided that Yugoslavia reciprocated, would undergo no change as a result of the agreement with Austria, Stojadinović assured me that Yugoslavia too would in future, as hitherto, continue to keep out of any combination directed against Germany. As far as her relations with Germany were concerned, Yugoslavia felt herself to be a completely free agent. He would, moreover, continue in his efforts to make these relations ever closer. Yugoslavia was making no claims against Italy. From July 15 onwards Yugoslavia would also regard herself as no longer bound by the mutual aid obligations undertaken for the period of sanctions;<sup>2</sup> the British promise to continue was entirely unilateral.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Mediterranean Agreements; see documents Nos. 403, footnote 4, and 446.

<sup>3</sup> Eden announced the British Government's intention of continuing to regard the Mediterranean Agreements as being in force, on June 18 in the House of Commons, and on July 1 before the Assembly of the League of Nations; see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 313, col. 1206, and League of Nations: *Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly*, Special Supplement No. 151, pp. 34-35. On July 27, 1936, Eden stated that, in view of assurances given by the Italian Government to the Governments of Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey and of which the Italian Government had informed him, the British Government considered that the need to continue these Agreements no longer existed. See *Parl. Debs. H. of C.*, vol. 315, cols. 1121-1123.

I gained the impression from the conversation that Stojadinović was not entirely free from anxiety about a German-Italian *rapprochement* and wanted to indicate that a Yugoslav-Italian *rapprochement* depended entirely on Italian goodwill.

I would suggest that I be given guidance on language to be held, particularly with regard to press speculation concerning the impending formation of a bloc of States having authoritarian régimes.

HEEREN

## No. 450

1744/402911

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 69 of July 15

PRAGUE, July 15, 1936—4:45 p.m.

Received July 15—7:15 p.m.

Pol. IV 1559.

With reference to my report A III 1 allgem. of July 11.<sup>1</sup>

The Austrian Minister<sup>2</sup> has informed me of a conversation yesterday with Krofta concerning the German-Austrian agreement.<sup>3</sup> According to him Krofta began, as he did with me, by stating that he regarded the German-Austrian *rapprochement* as natural and therefore inevitable, although he had not expected it so soon. Nevertheless it had occasioned depression and anxiety here (as was clear from the leading article in the *Prager Presse* of June 20, which had been inspired by Beneš himself). It was true that in theory the opportunity existed for all countries to accede to the Rome Protocols, and if members of the Little Entente did so, then that organization of the Danubian region which had so long been desired could be accomplished, in concert with Italy and Germany. Czechoslovakia was prepared to accede to the Rome Protocols, it would not be hard to persuade Rumania to do so, and if Germany were to exert her undeniable powerful influence on Yugoslavia that country too could be won over to the idea. But apart from this favourable possibility, another possibility must be taken into account, namely that Germany would now isolate Czechoslovakia and increase her pressure on Czechoslovakia. That would put his country into a very difficult position. Krofta asked that his statements be treated as private and confidential expressions of his own train of thought.

EISENLOHR

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1744/402885-88); in this despatch Eisenlohr reported a conversation, on July 10, with Krofta, during which, after raising a number of complaints of anti-German conduct by Czechoslovak officials and press, he had sought Krofta's views on an Austro-German *détente*, such as was rumoured in the press to be impending.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Ferdinand Marek.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

## No. 451

6744/402897-900

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 138 of July 15

LONDON, July 15, 1936.

Received July 16—8:25 a.m.

Pol. IV 1556.

This afternoon I called on Sir Robert Vansittart in order to obtain information about the British view of the present political situation. The conversation began with the German-Austrian Agreement,<sup>1</sup> which, Vansittart explained to me, the British Government warmly welcomed, since, through the ending of German-Austrian tension, one of the sources of danger in Europe had been removed. As far as he had been able to perceive, the British press too had unanimously taken this attitude. I thereupon held language with Sir Robert in accordance with your telegram No. 163 of July 11,<sup>2</sup> and emphasized especially that the Agreement which had just been achieved represented a proof of the correctness of the German policy of securing the settlement of international relations primarily on the basis of bilateral agreements; at which Sir Robert remarked that naturally no one could hold it against the German Government that they claimed this Agreement as a success for their policy; there were, however, still a number of States who abided by their belief in the correctness of multilateral treaties.

I then mentioned certain utterances in the press which, with reference to the friendly relations between Germany and Italy, had concluded from our agreement with Austria that this entailed the creation of a north-south bloc or rather the resurrection of the Triple Alliance.<sup>3</sup> Of this there was no question. Our relationship with Italy involved nothing but a gratifying improvement in relations between the two countries. Sir Robert said that he too placed no other construction upon the German-Italian friendship and, so far as he knew, no more far-reaching interpretations had appeared in the responsible British press.

The conversation then turned to the projected Locarno conversations. Sir Robert said that no final decision had yet been taken on this. At the moment, it was a question of whether the Locarno conversations between the three remaining Locarno Powers, which in Geneva had been envisaged for July 22<sup>4</sup>, should take place, or whether

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 154 in Vol. I of Series D, which was Telegram No. 163 to London (1744/402848).

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Triple Alliance between Germany, Austro-Hungary and Italy, first formed in 1881.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 757.



this should be abandoned and a conference of the five Powers be convened for a later date. The French Government were pressing for the first course. I replied that I urgently hoped that the British Government would decide for the second course; Germany was now as previously prepared to take part in conversations with a view to creating a new Locarno pact, but naturally only if these were conducted from the start on the basis of full equality of rights and the inclusion of the five Locarno Powers. Should, however, the course be adopted of only inviting us at a later stage, then one could not expect Germany to take part in the conversations. This argument made a visible impression on Sir Robert and he hastened to explain that he was firmly convinced that practical results could only be achieved at a five-Power conference. Any conference of the remaining Locarno Powers which might take place beforehand would be of formal significance only. How things would develop further he could not, as he had said, tell me at this stage, but in any case he believed that even the Brussels conference without Germany and Italy, if it were to take place at all, could not now be called for July 22, as there was too little time to agree on an agenda. Should this preliminary conference be abandoned and it be decided to call a five-Power conference straight away, this could take place probably at the earliest at the beginning of September, before the meeting of the Council of the League of Nations, otherwise after it, at the beginning of October.

On my enquiring about the state of the Montreux Conference Vansittart referred me to Craigie, who had already asked me to come and see him tomorrow at midday to inform me on the situation.<sup>5</sup> He himself had not been able to concern himself with the Conference and had been compelled to leave it to Craigie, but he believed that by tomorrow the situation at Montreux would already have gone a long way towards clarification.

At the end of our talk Sir Robert again voiced the hope which he recently expressed to me, namely, that he would still be able to attend the Olympic Games.<sup>6</sup> He had already booked his ticket and if it was at all possible he would come to Berlin where he would stay at the British Embassy.

I took my leave of him with the pressing advice that he should bring all his influence to bear in favour of calling a conference of the five Locarno Powers, without holding a conference with Belgium and France beforehand.

Throughout the entire conversation Sir Robert evinced marked amiability and pressingly invited me to call on him again as often as I wished, but in any case during the coming week.

BISMARCK

<sup>5</sup> See also document No. 453.

<sup>6</sup> Due to open in Berlin on Aug. 1.

## No. 452

1744/402880-81

*The Director of the Political Department to the Legation in  
Yugoslavia*

Telegram

No. 90

BERLIN, July 16, 1936—6:15 p.m.  
zu Pol. IV 1500<sup>1</sup> Ang. 1.

With reference to your telegram No. 75.<sup>1</sup> For the Minister personally.

For information and guidance on language to be held.

Speculation in the foreign press about the formation of a German-Italo-Austro-Hungarian bloc with or without Poland is without any foundation. After the settlement of German-Austrian relations,<sup>2</sup> our relations with Italy are not burdened by any immediate points of difference: on the contrary there are wide spheres where our interests run parallel and this naturally finds expression in a parallel attitude towards foreign policy. A German option in Italy's favour has neither taken place nor is it contemplated.

In the Restoration question we agree with the Yugoslav view that any acute danger of this has been eliminated by the German-Austrian agreement. We also have reason to believe that Schuschnigg's statement, to the effect that any possible changes in the constitution should only be decided by means of a plebiscite and that a plebiscite cannot be considered as long as a Restoration would involve the danger of war,<sup>3</sup> represents the true intentions of the Austrian Government. Naturally Germany's interest in preventing the Restoration remains unchanged. We clearly expressed our anxieties about this question in London and in Rome shortly before the German-Austrian agreement. The non-intervention clause of July 11<sup>2</sup> does not mean that we renounce the political attitude we have held hitherto towards the Habsburg question which, in consequence of the danger of war it involves, is of European significance. Schuschnigg has denied to Minister von Papen the authenticity of that part of his interview with Ward Price (*Daily Mail* of July 13)<sup>4</sup> which said that Germany was bound by the non-intervention clause to leave this question to Austria.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 449.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>3</sup> Presumably a reference to the interview with Ward Price; see footnote 4 below.

<sup>4</sup> An extract from the interview (7856/E569762) bears the following marginal notes (i) "Please inform London, Belgrade, etc.," (ii) "Discussed today with Herr v. Papen. The Federal Chancellor, in response to his representations, had informed him yesterday that the sentence had been inaccurately reported; he had not said that. D[ieckhoff]." See also Series D, vol. 1, document No. 157.

We entirely agree with the statements made by you to Stojadinović with regard to German-Yugoslav relations.<sup>5</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>5</sup> Under Art. II of July 16 (1744/402882-84) the texts of document No. 449 and of the document here printed were circulated by telegram to the Missions in Paris, Rome, London, Warsaw, Brussels, Copenhagen, Bucharest, The Hague, Athens (No. 84), Sofia, Berne, Prague, Moscow and Vienna, and the Consulate at Geneva.

## No. 453

1638/390148-49

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 139 of July 16

[LONDON, July 16, 1936.]

Received July 17—9:00 a.m.

Sir Robert Craigie had asked me to call on him today in order to give me the following information about the present state of the Montreux Conference:

After the proposal, to which Britain objected, that Turkey—in case of a war in which she herself was neutral—should allow foreign warships right of passage through the Straits, not only in the execution of a general League of Nations obligation but also in putting into effect a pact of mutual assistance concluded under the auspices of the League of Nations, had been altered to the effect that Turkey should only accord this right of passage arising out of a pact of mutual assistance if she herself were a co-signatory of the pact in question, the British Government declared themselves in agreement with this formula. The main obstacle to reaching a convention was thereby removed and Craigie therefore assumed that the conclusion of a new convention would be achieved within the next few days. When I asked whether this new formula was not to be regarded as a kind of demand to Turkey to join the Franco-Russian Pact, Craigie replied in the negative. If Turkey intended to join the Franco-Russian Pact then she would do so, even without this stipulation. Besides, the proposal did not come from the Franco-Russian side but from Rumania who, on account of the Balkan Pact, had absolutely insisted that this formula should be adopted. What had made the British Government oppose the original proposal was the desire that Turkey should not be compelled to undertake commitments, automatically as it were, arising out of a pact to which she herself in no way belonged. The whole question was in any case of a highly academic nature and it was hardly conceivable that the case would arise in practice. The British Government had therefore accepted the compromise proposal, in order thereby to avoid the break-

down of the Conference, which was otherwise to be feared and which would have forced Turkey to depend more than ever on Russia, whereas it could now be expected that, after the conclusion of the convention which allowed Turkey to refortify the Straits, Turkey would be substantially strengthened and would therefore be more independent in her political decisions.

Craigie then went through the individual articles with me with the aid of the British draft of the convention, on which a separate report follows.<sup>1</sup>

BISMARCK

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<sup>1</sup> This was Report A 2872 of July 16 (1638/390160-64).

No. 454

3610/E026925-26

*Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the  
Political Department*

BERLIN, July 16, 1936.  
Pol. I 1200.

The Dutch Minister, who called on me yesterday about another matter, enquired at the same time about the state of affairs in the question of the Locarno discussions. I took this opportunity to ask the Minister, what was in fact the Dutch attitude to the German offer to include the Netherlands in a new Locarno Treaty.<sup>1</sup> I added that I was only asking for my personal information, as I did not yet know what discussions might already have taken place about this matter.

Count Limburg-Stirum said that State Secretary Bülow had spoken to him about this matter<sup>2</sup> immediately after the Führer's speech of March 7.<sup>3</sup> He had subsequently also had an opportunity to discuss the matter with the Führer and Reich Chancellor.<sup>4</sup> The latter had told him that his offer was intended as a friendly gesture towards the Netherlands who were thereby to be afforded the possibility of joining in the Locarno discussions, if they themselves should consider this to be in their interests. The Minister, referring less to his Government than to the Dutch people, said that in the Netherlands there was no inclination towards participation in a Locarno treaty. He added quite frankly that the Dutch were fairly certain that, in the event of a German attack on the Netherlands, Britain would support them in her own interests. The Netherlands had therefore no interest in being drawn into other combinations.

WOERMANN

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<sup>1</sup> See documents Nos. 3, enclosure, and 4.

<sup>2</sup> Bülow briefly recorded this conversation in a memorandum of Mar. 7 (4602/E190372).

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 31.

<sup>4</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.



## No. 455

NUREMBERG DOCUMENT 705-D

*The Minister in Austria to the Führer and Chancellor*

At BERLIN, July 16, 1936.

MY FÜHRER: On July 26, 1934 you proposed to the late Field Marshal that I should be sent to Vienna on a mission, for a limited time, for the restoration of "normal and friendly relations".<sup>1</sup>

With the agreement signed on July 11,<sup>2</sup> the decisive step has been taken in this direction. I am very well aware what a difficult decision it must have been for you in many respects to take this step. It constitutes all the more, I am utterly convinced, a statesmanlike act of the first order.

The effect on foreign policy is clearly apparent: our friends admire the decision; our enemies are forced to admit that the leadership of European policy has slipped from French or Franco-British hands and has passed to Germany.

Where the effect on internal affairs of the German-Austrian agreement is concerned, I can state that it was greeted with great rejoicing, both in Germany and Austria. The Party members in Austria have assured me that they stand with complete discipline behind the Führer, whose action has guaranteed for them the future of the all-German destiny [*gesamtdeutschen Schicksals*]. All in all, the German people [*Volk*] on either side of the frontier have been relieved of an incredible spiritual burden and they are now tackling the solution of the German question along new lines.

It has always been a subject of pride for me that you, my Führer, entrusted me, at a critical moment in German history, with a task which embraced the shaping of the all-German destiny for the future. During the last two years, this path has led for me to many bitter disappointments if not personal humiliation. Today, I can feel convinced that the path I have followed has not been in vain.

Even though the "German question" will need very careful handling and cultivation in the future too, especially after the incredible difficulties which have gone before, yet I would nevertheless like, now that the time for the task you allotted to me has expired, to place my office back in your hands again.

I thank you, my Führer, for the fact that I have had the good fortune to work for Germany and your great mission.<sup>3</sup>

PAPEN

<sup>1</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 123.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>3</sup> See also Franz von Papen, *Memoirs* (London, 1952), pp. 370-372.

## No. 456

1833/418759-60

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 2873

LONDON, July 16, 1936.

Received July 18.

Pol. I 1171.

Subject: Conversation with Sir Robert Craigie about the Montreux Conference.

With reference to your despatch Pol. I 956 Ang. III of July 13<sup>1</sup> and our telegram No. 139 of July 16.<sup>2</sup>

On the occasion of my conversation today with Sir Robert Craigie (see our telegram No. 139 and Report A 2872<sup>3</sup> of July 16), I took the opportunity of carrying out the instructions contained in your despatch Pol. I 956 Ang. III of July 13. I referred in this connexion to the conversations which the British Chargé d'Affaires had had first with Herr Woermann and then later with the Foreign Minister. When I started to say that Mr. Newton had, as had Sir Robert Craigie to me, described as completely false the reports that the Russian fleet after egress from the Dardanelles was to be subject to definite limitations for its stay in the Mediterranean or for its passage to the Far East, Sir Robert interrupted me and stated that it had come to his knowledge in the meantime that Russia had, in fact, made such a proposal of *her own accord*; it had, however, at once been rejected by the other Powers. I replied to Sir Robert that according to this there must after all have been some truth in the information which had reached us and that the fears expressed in the familiar article in the *Diplomatische Korrespondenz* were not without real foundation. After making use of the statements contained in your despatch under reference I declared that the matter was settled on the strength of the explanations given to us.

In accordance with instructions I pointed out most emphatically that there could be no question of a change in the German attitude to the German-British Naval Treaty and that we still continued to attach the greatest importance to the maintenance and strengthening of the relationship of mutual trust established by the Naval Treaty. Sir Robert appeared to be particularly pleased with this last information and said he would not fail to bring it to the notice of Foreign Secretary Eden.

BISMARCK

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 448.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 453.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 453, footnote 1.

## No. 457

1486/368488-97; 99

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

3435

ROME, July 17, 1936.

Received July 18.

Pol. IV 1615.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The main aspects of present Italian foreign policy.

I should like to supplement my telegram on my conversation with Mussolini on the afternoon of July 11<sup>1</sup> with a few remarks on the present position of Italian foreign policy. These remarks are based partly on the impressions left by this conversation, partly on a conversation with Under Secretary of State Bastianini and other personages, and partly on information from a confidant.

*The German-Austrian understanding.*<sup>2</sup>

The German-Austrian understanding has probably in no country made a greater impression than in Italy. The press made front-page news of the event, hailing it as a success for the Duce's policy. If one considers that not long ago there appeared to be grounds for the assumption that Italian policy saw it as an essential aim to prevent such a bridge from being built, then the change, which was clearly expressed for the first time in Mussolini's statements to me of January 6 of this year (my telegram No. 2),<sup>3</sup> becomes apparent. Although it is completely incorrect to represent the agreement now reached as the work of Italian policy, it can, on the other hand, not be denied that at that time Mussolini suggested an understanding between Vienna and Berlin on the basis now adopted and promised it his agreement: on the basis of Austria as an independent State, but a *German* Austria which could conduct no policy other than a *German* one. Certainly Mussolini made this declaration, the sincerity of which was much doubted at the time, under heavy pressure from the situation in which Italy found herself, and to that degree we owe this change, like much else besides, to the East African undertaking. At the same time, however, it stemmed from the conviction at which Mussolini had arrived that to concentrate Italian policy on the watch on the Brenner against an imaginary German danger would in the long run be dangerous and harmful to Italy herself.

The profound impression which the event of July 11 has made in Italy is based, on the one hand, on the fact that the fear of an *Anschluss*

<sup>1</sup> See Series D, vol. I, document No. 155.

<sup>2</sup> Of July 11. See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 485.



of Austria with the Reich has, at least temporarily, been removed and, on the other hand, on the fact that the Austrian mortgage on Italian foreign policy and above all on German-Italian relations was coming to be felt more and more as a heavy and superfluous burden, particularly since the understanding so laboriously achieved with France had shown itself to be of highly problematic value. Many people, too, who were not altogether without responsibility for the above-mentioned Italian concentration on the Brenner, have, doubtless taking counsel of necessity, succeeded in revising their opinion for the better. In this respect the enclosed letter from Suvich to me may be of interest.

*A Bloc of the  
Central Powers?*

Like much of the international press, a section of Italian public opinion too pretends to see in the German-Austrian understanding, together with the Italian Locarno Note to Brussels,<sup>4</sup> proof of the formation of a firm bloc between Germany and the three signatories to the Rome Protocols<sup>5</sup> as well as of secret agreements, in the nature of an alliance, between Rome and Berlin. This view is further strengthened by the presence—which has of course become known—of a number of German officers in Rome,<sup>6</sup> who are alleged to have concluded a military convention. I immediately and everywhere refuted the false interpretation put upon this visit and, as it seems, with success. The “formation of a bloc” as such, however, continues to be a source of anxiety, also to those observers who, without being opponents of Germany or of Italy, see the darkest war-clouds gathering on the horizon. In all my conversations I have described the idea of such a bloc as a myth, and have emphasized that German policy is substantially determined by nothing other than the rejection of such alliance-like formations, and certainly does not desire to drive out the devil with the aid of Beelzebub. The only thing which did exist (I stated) was a parallelism between important German and Italian interests, which was asserting itself in an atmosphere of restored trust; this in our view in no way conflicted with general European interests, and in any case was far from being a dangerous pact policy, such as had been pursued by France and Soviet Russia, with Czechoslovakia as an accessory. Just as in the Duce’s message to the Führer

<sup>4</sup> Of July 11. See document No. 446, footnote 9.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., Italy, Austria and Hungary, the signatories to the Rome Protocols of Mar. 17, 1934, and the Additional Protocols of Mar. 23, 1936; see document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

<sup>6</sup> In a cipher letter, Pol. I 236 g., of June 9 (3175/682605), Dieckhoff informed Hassell, in strict secrecy, that an Italian inter-Services delegation had spent about a week in Berlin; the visit had been set in train by Gen. Roatta and the delegation had admitted that it had taken place without the knowledge of the Italian Foreign Ministry though they had been received beforehand by Mussolini. In a cipher letter, Pol. I 651 g. Rs., of June 30 (3175/682626), Hassell was confidentially informed that the German War Ministry had decided to return the visit; a German inter-Services delegation would visit Rome from June 6 to 11 for discussions on technical questions and exchange postings in the sphere of military cooperation, but with express instructions not to touch on operational questions.



conveyed by Attolico (your telegram No. 143 of July 15),<sup>7</sup> Mussolini, during my conversation with him on July 11, took the line that in the course of the last twelve months events had shown clearly enough the parallelism between German and Italian interests, which formed a much better basis for political cooperation than formal [*paraphrasierte*] pacts or emotional attitudes. Under-State Secretary Bastianini developed the same ideas to me.

This does not exclude the possibility that the coalition, which M. Gömbös<sup>8</sup> in particular likes to picture, of the four "have-not" neighbour States with authoritarian régimes and, if possible, with the inclusion of Poland, does, in the minds of Mussolini and Ciano too, possess a certain reality, above all in the sense of a reaction to, and a counter-balance for, Soviet Russian policy and its collaboration with France especially in South-East Europe. Signor Bastianini, in his conversation with me, spoke, in connexion with an earlier conversation about the policy of the individual members of the Little Entente, of

*German-Italian  
understanding  
about the  
South East.*

the necessity, now that the Austrian mortgage had been removed, of devoting attention to friendly collaboration between Italy and Germany in the South East. It is interesting that at about the same time the *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* published a

report from London that opinion there is "inclined to expect Germany's economic advance in the Danubian region to result in a cooling-off, albeit gradual, in Rome". Here there are indeed important tasks and prospects as well as dangers. I should like to revert today for the first time to my reports during the years 1933 and 1934<sup>8</sup> on the necessity of a German-Italian understanding of a political and, above all, of a politico-economic nature in the Danubian Basin; such an understanding was at that time prevented by the outbreak of the sharp conflict over Austria and receded into the background in consequence of other events also. Now, however, we should again direct our attention to it. In the sphere of *economic policy* our negotiating position *vis-à-vis* Italy has improved in so far as our position in the Italian as well as in the South-Eastern market has been strengthened, while in the Danubian region that of Italy has been weakened as a result of sanctions and the difficulty of securing raw materials for Italy's main articles of export, namely, textiles. For Italy, naturally, the foremost question

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (1744/402893); this informed the Rome Embassy that the Italian Ambassador had been instructed by his Government to state that Mussolini had received the news of the conclusion of the German-Austrian Agreement with great satisfaction and requested that the Führer and Chancellor be informed that he was determined to pursue the policy parallel to that of the German Reich which logically resulted from the "coincidence naturelle". This conversation with Attolico, according to Dieckhoff's memorandum of it (1744/402892), took place on July 14. See also Series D, vol. I, document No. 155, footnote 9.

<sup>8</sup> See vols. I and II of this Series, *passim*; see also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 61.

is that of what role in future the Rome Protocols will play, especially in relation to Germany. So far I have confined myself to saying that our point of view is apparent in the communiqué on the agreement with Vienna,<sup>2</sup> and that in any case it remains the same as before, i.e., we are not considering acceding, but are, however, prepared to maintain with each individual State in the South-East trade relations which are directed towards promoting the greatest possible exchange of goods. That Czechoslovakia has already approached Italy with an enquiry as to whether the door of the Rome Agreements is still open to her, the Czechoslovak Minister here<sup>9</sup> confirmed to me today. I should be grateful if I could soon be provided with instructions on this whole complex of questions.<sup>10</sup>

In the *political* sphere I have tried in this connexion, as recently reported,<sup>11</sup> to direct attention here to the basic difference that exists between Czechoslovak and/or Rumanian policy on the one hand, and Yugoslav policy on the other, *vis-à-vis* Soviet Russia and to the possibilities which arise from this. I have the impression that Signor Bastianini, for example, is less opposed to the idea of systematically decreasing the tension between Italy and Yugoslavia than was still mostly the case here only recently.

*Relations with  
Britain.*

I have refuted the "bloc designs" with the further argument that now as previously Germany holds firmly to the desire to come to an understanding with the Western Powers and most especially with Britain. I am convinced that Mussolini's policy too continues to be guided to a considerable extent by the endeavour to clear the atmosphere between Italy and Britain. In this connexion, reference should be made to his interview with Mr. Knickerbocker<sup>12</sup> and to the fact that the withdrawal of troops from Libya was expressly announced on that occasion, and does seem already to have begun. Mussolini, like Ciano and Bastianini, certainly considers this task difficult enough, above all in view of the obscurities and vacillations of British political leadership. The view is, moreover, held here that Britain's main aim for the moment is speedy and large-scale rearmament with the ulterior motive that, on the basis of sufficient strength once this has been gained, it will be possible to confront both Italy as well as Germany, more successfully than of late, with an *aut-aut* [either-or] in the armaments question itself and perhaps in other questions too.

*Relations with  
France.*

Where France is concerned, Italian mistrust of her political leadership is today in some ways greater than is Italian mistrust of Britain; moreover

<sup>9</sup> Dr. František Chvalkovský.

<sup>10</sup> See also document No. 523

<sup>11</sup> No report on this subject has been found.

<sup>12</sup> H. R. Knickerbocker, American journalist. His interview with Mussolini was published in *Paris-Soir* on July 16, 1936.

France is today estimated as a considerably less important factor than formerly. It would none the less be wrong to conclude that Italy has clearly and finally turned against Paris or that she intends to do so. The hope of returning to more cordial relations after all is firmly held. The unveiling of a statue to the Maid of Orleans, which was to have taken place on July 14, has indeed been postponed, but only postponed—not cancelled. It is precisely Italy's uncertain position *vis-à-vis* Britain which must make it seem desirable for her not to be at marked variance with France. If I am correctly informed,

*Relations with  
Soviet Russia.*

Mussolini, like ourselves, sees in the Franco-Russo-Czech Pact the main obstacle to a reasonable settlement of European affairs; in this sense one can say that at present Roman policy is completely "anti-Soviet".

*The Mediterranean  
Problem.*

Italian relations with the Western Powers are today governed very largely by the problem of the Mediterranean and the Dardanelles.

Firstly the British Mediterranean Agreements: These are regarded as being, in practice, at an end. In order to build a bridge for Greece, Yugoslavia and Turkey, they have been told that they may consider themselves secure against any Italian measures of reprisal for their conduct during the period of sanctions. Since the Greek Government have now made a kind of declaration of termination to the Italian Minister in Athens, since a similar declaration is expected from Yugoslavia, and since the Quai d'Orsay, too, have had their own way again, in face of Blum's sidestep in the *Populaire*, the whole thing seems to be hardly more than a sham. As, however, Mr. Eden has recently again declared in favour of their continuance,<sup>13</sup> the pre-condition for "European cooperation" by Italy does not yet exist on the British side.

*The Dardanelles  
Question.*

The agreement between Britain, Russia and Turkey in the Dardanelles question is viewed with the same anxiety as the Franco-Russo-Czech Pact. But the determination not to recognize the decisions of Montreux, in which Italy had no hand, appears to continue.

*Turkey.*

There is deep embitterment and disillusionment where Turkey is concerned; I have already reported on this in connexion with my conversation with Mussolini. In this respect the construction which a well-informed confidant puts on the expression used by Mussolini in his interview, namely, that Italy is now a colonially satisfied nation, is not without interest: Mussolini himself had told him that in the present situation this expression could naturally have only a tactical and opportunist interpretation; certainly Italy was now "satisfied" and had enough to do with her acquisition

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 449, footnote 3.



(for whose development Italy is inviting the participation of American capital in particular, as emphasized in the interview), but in the course of time new aims might of course emerge. Thus Italy had for a long time been offering Turkey every conceivable guarantee. But if that country were to continue to pursue an anti-Italian policy and above all systematically to undermine or obstruct all purely economic Italian activity in Turkey, then, for example, a new situation could arise in this respect.

*Conclusion.* To sum up, I believe—on the basis also of further remarks which Mussolini made to my confidant—that I can sketch out the main lines of current Italian policy as follows:

(1) Expansion of her own position of power in Europe, in the Mediterranean and in Africa; development and consolidation of the new African acquisitions with the aid of American capital.

(2) Development of cooperation with the States of the Rome Protocols and with Germany; if possible also with Poland. Securing Italian interests and regulation of matters in the South East in agreement with Germany.

(3) Efforts towards a *modus vivendi* with Britain in the hope that the differences between the Powers concerned in the Eastern Mediterranean, which at present appear to have been bridged over, will yet have their effects after all.

(4) Opposition to the Russo-Franco-Czech Pact system; efforts, whilst avoiding any marked difference with France, to bring her, under acceptable conditions—together with Germany—to participate in the joint treatment of Western security questions and, if need be, in the reform of the League of Nations.

HASSELL

[Enclosure]<sup>14</sup>

ROME, July 13, 1936/XIV.

DEAR AMBASSADOR: I am happy to convey to you as the representative of the Government of the Reich, my most cordial congratulations on the achievement of the German-Austrian Agreement, which resolves one of the most thorny European problems to the satisfaction of both sides.

The manifestations of Italian satisfaction—both official and unofficial—have been spontaneous and general.

I, who have so often expressed, also in conversations with yourself, my hopes for such an understanding, and who have had the good

<sup>14</sup> This enclosure is in Italian in the original; the files also contain a German translation (1436/368498).



fortune actively to follow the beginning of the final phase, am especially gratified.

Pray accept, my dear Ambassador, the expression of my cordial esteem.

Yours,

SUVICH

## No. 458

3827/E028169-72

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P IV 17/7. 36.

WARSAW, July 17, 1936.

Received July 18.

Pol. V 1872.

### POLITICAL REPORT

If one follows the press, both of the Opposition and of the Government camp, the first excitement about Greiser's speech<sup>1</sup> has somewhat died down, and that primarily because the Government made known their firm determination on no account to surrender the Polish rights in Danzig or even to let them be in the slightest degree diminished. It is unmistakable, however, that the nervousness caused by the possibility of a Danzig conflict continues to prevail among the public. It is again being plainly shown how very strongly Polish susceptibilities react as soon as a problem arises which is in any way connected with the question of access to the sea. In addition there is the factor that all those elements which are not in agreement with the German-Polish policy of understanding naturally make use of every opportunity to point out the justification for eternal mistrust of Germany, and to expound the necessity for a change in current policy. Finally, however, there are also plenty of people who make use of such incidents to forge weapons against the person of Foreign Minister Beck.

A very clear sign of the excitement that prevails even now is a proclamation which was posted-up this morning in the streets of Warsaw, calling for a mass meeting under the slogan of extending Poland's rights in Danzig. Among the 200 different organizations which signed this appeal, on which I am reporting separately today (see today's report, P V 17/7. 36),<sup>2</sup> are the Association of Legionaries and the Maritime and Colonial League, both of which are so close to the Government that it is inconceivable that a meeting should have been arranged by them without the express permission of official authorities. As I hear, there have been differences of opinion in the Government about this appeal.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 430, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7586/E543225-27).

It is said that the Minister of Economics, Roman, who is particularly well acquainted with the Danzig question,<sup>3</sup> regarded the demonstration as harmful, and M. Beck is also said to have expressed grave misgivings by telephone; finally, however, the Cabinet did approve the meeting after all.

As soon as the proclamation appeared, I went to the Deputy [Foreign] Minister, Count Szembek, in order to draw his attention to this anti-German meeting. Count Szembek pointed out that Herr Greiser had, after all, raised the question of the alteration of the Danzig Statute in the forum of the Council of the League of Nations, and that public opinion was extremely sensitive in these matters. I replied that there did not seem to me to be the slightest occasion for thus inflating this complex of questions, which was being calmly and quietly discussed by the two Governments, and that it was most undesirable to permit such meetings, which must necessarily arouse feeling against Germany. Count Szembek observed that it was a spontaneous meeting and that the Government considered it more appropriate to provide a safety valve for the excitement which undeniably existed.

Even though in the end the meeting did not assume such large proportions as its organizers may have hoped, the event nevertheless shows that forces are at work which are trying to exploit the Danzig incident in a direction undesirable for us, and that the Government are doing nothing to counter these tendencies.

In this connexion I should also like to draw attention to the elevation of General Rydz-Smigly to the position of "second personality in the State", about which I am reporting separately today.<sup>4</sup> It is certainly true that this only confirms in authentic form a state of affairs which has already been developing for a number of months. That this formal confirmation should take place at this precise moment, however, and that, in the reasons given, the geopolitical situation of Poland and the importance of the defence of the country should be referred to, seems nonetheless to justify the assumption that here, too, the Danzig problem may have played a certain part.

Furthermore, it was thought appropriate this year to mark the French National Day in a way which did go somewhat further than is customary (see report P IV 21/7. 36 of July 17 [*sic*: P V 21/7. 36 of July 18] of this year).<sup>5</sup> Equally noteworthy in this connexion seems to me to be the speech by the new Polish Ambassador in Paris, M. Łukasiewicz, who spoke about Polish-French friendship in terms such as have not been heard for a long time. One gains the impression that the

<sup>3</sup> Antoni Roman, at that time Polish Minister to Sweden, had conducted negotiations between Poland and Danzig in the summer of 1935; see also vol. IV of this Series, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> General Rydz-Smigly's appointment as Inspector General of the Armed Forces was announced on July 17, 1936; Moltke's report, Pol. V 1924 of July 17, is not printed (2102/455091-93).

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7576/E542901).

marked emphasis placed on the Polish-French alliance at this juncture was addressed, at least indirectly, to Germany too.

To what extent M. Beck, who is at present on leave, approves of these proceedings, cannot as yet be estimated. It has of late sometimes seemed as if foreign policy were being strongly influenced by military quarters. But, in any case, there are at present some symptoms which seem worthy of attention from the point of view of maintaining good relations between Germany and Poland, and which deserve consideration in connexion with the further treatment of the Danzig question.

V. MOLTKE

### No. 459

7788/E559242-47

#### *The Naval Conference Group (SK) to the Office of the Commander in Chief of the Navy(M)*<sup>1</sup>

SECRET

BERLIN, July 17, 1936.

Neu SK 112 geh.

V.m. SK 149.<sup>2</sup>

Subject: Observations on the new militaro-political situation arising from the naval negotiations with Russia<sup>3</sup> and the fortification of the Dardanelles.

You should forward to the Naval Attaché in London the following observations, which give the Commander in Chief of the Navy's views on the points dealt with:

#### *I. Qualitative restriction of the Russian Far Eastern Fleet*

(a) Russia can at any time concentrate the individual portions of her fleet at the focal point of political developments. It is perfectly possible that at times of tension part of the Russian Far Eastern fleet will be detached to the Baltic. This transfer would be all the easier to effect since, in consequence of the Franco-Russian Military Alliance, the French bases in Indo-China, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean, are available to the Russian fleet.

(b) In the light of the Franco-Russian Military Alliance, the French and Russian fleets must be assessed as *one* unit. It is therefore conceivable that units of the Russian Black Sea fleet might be placed at the disposal of France in the Mediterranean, so that French forces to a

<sup>1</sup> It would appear (cf. document No. 470, footnote 2) that the substance of the document here printed was sent to London as despatch 1720 g of July 21.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 421.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 402, footnote 9.

corresponding strength would be freed for the Northern theatre of war.

(c) Another possibility is that of the Russian Black Sea fleet being moved to the Baltic and being replaced by units of the Far Eastern fleet.

These observations show that there is a strong connexion between the individual portions of the Russian fleet. It must accordingly be regarded as a single entity.

(d) The Russian shipyards in the Far East have hitherto permitted the construction of fairly small vessels only. The Russian warships for the Far East are therefore constructed, in the main, in the Baltic shipyards. Until they are finally taken over and all trial voyages have been carried out, the warships remain in the Baltic. These trial voyages can be postponed at will, so that in this way, too, it is possible for Russia to retain in the Baltic for a fairly long period, and especially in times of tension, warships which have been constructed for the Far East.

(e) The expansion of the Far Eastern fleet does not need, as Sir R. Craigie believes, to be confined principally to submarines. The Baltic shipyards are certainly in a position to construct at least "A"-class cruisers. In addition, as we hear, a 35,000-ton capital ship is being built in Britain for Russia. This possibility of Russian warships being built in foreign shipyards must also be taken into account.

## II. *Russian "A"-class cruisers*

It emerges from the data given by the Russian Naval Attaché in London (Naval Attaché London No. 566 of June 18, 1936)<sup>4</sup> and from statements by Sir R. Craigie (London Embassy, A 2690 of July 1, 1936)<sup>2</sup> that the Russians are equipping all the cruisers which they are building and intend to build with 18 cm. guns. Germany considers these cruisers to be "A"-class cruisers in accordance with Article 16 of the London Treaty of 1930.

The following data contained in the British Memorandum of May 29, 1936,<sup>5</sup> are consequently to be regarded as out of date or doubtful:

Paragraph 3 . . . "The acceptance (of the building holiday) of those Powers (U.S.A., Britain, France) had been conditional on no further building of this type of vessel being undertaken by any Power, pending the entry into force of the Treaty . . ."

Paragraph 4 . . . "In point of fact, no capital ships or cruisers have, so far as is known, been laid down during this period (since February 26, 1936) by any European Power. So far as Category A cruisers themselves are concerned, none have been laid down in Europe since 1931 . . ."

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (7790/E562618-19).

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 355, enclosure.



Paragraph 5 . . . "In particular, there is no reason to believe that the Soviet Government have, during that interval (after February 26, 1936), laid down any cruiser of Sub-Category A. . . ."

Paragraph 8 . . . "that the German Government will reconsider their proposal and will be prepared, as their contribution to bringing the 'holiday' into effect and on the understanding that the proposal for a holiday is similarly adopted by other naval Powers, to revert to their original intention of utilizing for other purposes the 21,380 tons which will remain over . . ."

### III. *The Straits question*

(a) The decisive point for the assessment of the Straits question is the fortification of the Straits. The provisions concerning the right of passage are only of secondary importance. The militaro-political situation in Europe has changed in consequence of the fortification of the Dardanelles taken in conjunction with the Turkish-Russian Treaty of Friendship of 1925<sup>6</sup> and the Franco-Russian Military Alliance.

Hitherto, with the Dardanelles unfortified, the Russian Black Sea fleet has been used to protect Russian interests and to guard the coast. Now Turkey can close the Dardanelles to Russia's advantage. The Russian Black Sea fleet is therefore no longer tied to the Black Sea. It can be employed at other points of the Russian Empire, e.g., in the Baltic, without any military disadvantages necessarily ensuing in the Black Sea.<sup>7</sup>

As a result of this, the basis on which the German-British Naval Agreement came about has been altered.

(b) According to the latest press reports, an agreement between the parties to the treaty has been reached to the effect that Turkey, in actual case of war and if she is neutral, will close the Dardanelles to the warships and auxiliary ships of the belligerents, except when such vessels are sailing on behalf of the League of Nations, and in those cases where it is a matter of passage under the terms of the pacts and agreements concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

Accordingly, from now on, Germany can no longer expect to be able to pass through the Dardanelles in the event of war with Russia. It remains an open question to what extent the passage of Russian warships and auxiliary ships (troop transports) will continue to be per-

<sup>6</sup> The Treaty of Neutrality and Non-Aggression between Turkey and the U.S.S.R., with three Protocols, signed at Paris, Dec. 17, 1925; for the text see *British and Foreign State Papers*, Vol. 125, pp. 1001-1002.

<sup>7</sup> At this point the following sentence has been deleted before despatch: "The transfer of this fleet can already take place during the period of tension, thus still in time of peace, thereby excluding the terms about the rights of passage through the Dardanelles in war time."

mitted if such passage occurs on the basis of the Franco-Russian Military Alliance, as being a pact concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations.

For Germany the new Treaty means a considerable deterioration in the situation as compared with the Lausanne Treaty.

(c) To what extent the Franco-Turkish military alliance, which, according to indications in the press, is in process of development, will make the German position even worse, cannot yet be estimated.

#### IV. *Conclusions*

(a) If the Russian Far East fleet is not bound by qualitative restrictions in any way, the German reservation with regard to the conclusion of a qualitative German-British naval agreement on the basis of the Three-Power Treaty<sup>8</sup> is not fulfilled. Germany had stipulated that the Russians should be similarly "bound". If an integral component of the Russian fleet is not bound by treaty, the condition is not fulfilled.

(b) If the Russian cruisers under construction, and also those whose construction was commenced after the conclusion of the qualitative treaty, are equipped with 18 cm. guns, the building holiday has been invalidated by Russia. In the event that the conclusions under (a) do not hold good, then Germany claims complete freedom of action with regard to the "A"-class cruisers within the bounds of the German-British Naval Agreement.

(c) As a result of the fortification of the Dardanelles, the militaro-political situation in Europe has entirely changed, so that Germany will investigate, after the conclusion of this development, what reservations need to be made with regard to the treaty system hitherto obtaining.

V. In conversations with Sir R. Craigie and the Admiralty these views should be put forward as your personal opinion. Orders on further measures will follow.

p.p. SK  
C[ILIA]x, July 16.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 304.

<sup>9</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "To be submitted to Chief SK on his return." (ii) "G[use], [July] 24."

## No. 460

6659/E505254

*The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Belgium*

Drafting Officer:  
Counsellor Henle

BERLIN, July 18, 1936.  
Sent July 21.  
zu Pol. II 938.<sup>1</sup>

The enclosed<sup>2</sup> is forwarded for your information.

With reference to the proposal contained in the final paragraph regarding arrangements for M. Degrelle to give a lecture in Germany, it should be noted that the Foreign Ministry does not intend, for the time being, to adopt the suggestion.<sup>3</sup>

By order:  
W[OERMANN]

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<sup>1</sup> Pol. II 938 (not printed, 1159/326392-96) was a memorandum by Counsellor Braun von Stumm, dated July 3, 1936 recording a conversation with Dr. Duesberg, a Reich German and Berlin correspondent of various Belgian newspapers, who described the aims and methods of Léon Degrelle, the leader of the Rexist Party in Belgium, and stated that Degrelle had sought his aid to obtain an opportunity to give a lecture in Scandinavia and afterwards in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7560/E542076-78); this unsigned memorandum dated June 27, 1936, gave information about Degrelle supplied by Dr. Duesberg (see footnote 1 above).

<sup>3</sup> Typewritten marginal note: "The matter has been thoroughly discussed with Counsellor of Legation Bräuer, Brussels, who was passing through here, and who emphatically opposed the plan for Degrelle to give a lecture in Germany. Herr Bräuer foresaw no advantages from such a lecture, in particular not even in respect of D[egrelle]'s "committing himself" on the Eupen-Malmédy question, but on the contrary he feared that the Belgian Government would hold it against us for permitting such a lecture in Germany."

## No. 461

218/147928-31

*Memorandum by an Official of the Economic Policy Department*

[BERLIN, July 18, 1936.]

The Japanese Ambassador has again made representations in a grave tone about the Hapro contracts.<sup>1</sup> The Foreign Ministry<sup>2</sup> answered evasively and soothingly that the contract was after all only a private one—which is untrue, as the Japanese are aware, e.g., from statements made by the Chinese Minister of Finance to Suma,<sup>3</sup> and probably also from other sources—and that in any case the matter was only of small importance. It did not come to a discussion of the contracts in the light of the interests of both parties or to a frank con-

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 281.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to a conversation recorded in a memorandum of July 17 (218/147925-26) by Dieckhoff.

<sup>3</sup> A first secretary at the Japanese Embassy in China.

versation as to how German and Japanese interests could perhaps be harmonized in this respect.

On the same day Colonel General Göring telegraphed to the Raw Materials and Foreign Exchange Staff that the War Ministry was to be asked to report immediately what supplies of raw materials were *en route* here from China, and meanwhile to stop all German supplies to China.

If the Foreign Ministry had been able to give the Japanese Ambassador even a hint that it was possible to keep our deliveries to China within bounds acceptable to Japan, regarding which an understanding could be reached with Japan, the Japanese Ambassador would doubtless have left the Foreign Ministry with an easier mind than may have been the case after the actual course of the conversation, which was equally unpleasant for both sides; for he must have said to himself that this attempt, too, to enter into a frank exchange of views with a friendly Power about a question vital to Japan had failed.

Her relations with China occupy a central place in Japan's policy. Since the beginning of the World War (the Tsingtao expedition,<sup>4</sup> and the Twenty-one Demands),<sup>5</sup> it has been Japan's ineluctable aim to acquire predominance over China and thus hegemony in the entire Far Eastern living space. Forced by the financial crisis of 1920-21, and the termination of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance into the Washington Treaties,<sup>6</sup> Japan nevertheless did not lose sight of her aim for one moment. She gradually repelled foreign influences to such an extent that in 1931, in disregard of the Washington Treaties, she was able to conquer Manchuria and Jehol and to hold her ground in face of the protest by the League of Nations. Since then she has advanced further and has extended her influence to Hopei and Chahar. This has brought her into no serious difficulties where the World Powers are concerned: Russia was compelled to sell the North Manchurian railway<sup>7</sup> and has been forced back into a defensive position beyond the Amur, where, however, she still feels so threatened that she is maintaining a strong army there. America and Britain dropped their hesitant attempts to give China financial aid (the American Wheat and Cotton Loan of 50 million dollars;<sup>8</sup> Leith Ross)<sup>9</sup> when they observed the strong

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to the Japanese expedition against the German naval and coaling station at Tsingtao after the outbreak of war in 1914.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to a series of demands made by the Japanese Government on the Chinese Government on Jan. 18, 1915. See *The Sino-Japanese Negotiations of 1915* (Carnegie Endowment for World Peace, Washington, 1921), pp. 2-8; and H. W. V. Temperley, *A History of the Peace Conference* (London, 1924), vol. VI, pp. 631-33.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 196, footnote 2.

<sup>7</sup> On Mar. 23, 1935, an agreement was signed in Tokyo by representatives of the Soviet, Japanese and Manchukuo Governments, by which Russian rights in the Chinese Eastern Railway in Manchuria were sold to the Manchukuo Government.

<sup>8</sup> In English in the original; the grant of this loan was announced on June 4, 1933.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 195, footnote 5.



Japanese reaction. Japan thus had a free hand to drive the strongest power-factor in China, namely, Chiang Kai-shek, politically, militarily and financially more and more into a corner. The aim was to check-mate him so that he would have to come to an agreement with Japan.

At this moment Germany appears on the scene and grants Chiang Kai-shek—despite Hirota's warnings of April 1934<sup>10</sup>—a revolving credit of 100 million Marks, with the help of which an army of 100,000 men, later to be increased to 300,000, is to be set up, with modern equipment and the necessary war industry. How much of this is known to the Japanese is still doubtful; what is certain is that they will soon learn what they do not already know. It is noticeable too that Chinese self-assurance has increased and that the Chinese are using more defiant language than they have ventured to use towards Japan in the last few years.

Thus the effect of the moral pressure which Japan has been exerting on China during the last few years, and which made it possible for Japan to gain ground in China without any military measures, has already been partly called in question. Matters will be very much worse for Japan if the Hapro contracts are really carried out and if they lead to an increase in the military strength of China: even the minefield at the mouth of the Yangtse, with coastal batteries and motor torpedo boats would considerably reduce the Japanese fleet's chances of operating against Nanking. But what would be even worse would be the impression that Hirota's warning had only been a bluff. What would become of Japan's China policy if the other Powers copied Germany's example and provided the Chinese with military and industrial armament without regard to Japan?

Thus, as a result of the German contracts, Japan has been placed in the dilemma of either having passively to watch a development that will cause her China policy to spring a leak or of falling out with a friendly Power on whom she thought she could count *vis-à-vis* Russia. We have given evasive answers to every Japanese enquiry about the Hapro contracts, and Japan is asking herself whether we wish to pursue our China policy without Japan and against her.

If we persist in our China policy against Japan, Japan has two possibilities:

1. She can bring severe pressure to bear on China in order to cause the German Advisory Staff to disappear. This would presuppose possible military measures which Japan would certainly like to avoid.
2. She can give us to understand that, if we pay no attention to her interests whatever, a Japanese understanding with Russia is always possible. The Japanese have no irreparable points of friction with the Russians as long as the Russians leave the Japanese alone in

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<sup>10</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 408 and footnote 1 thereto.

China; and it might be that Russia would prefer to see Blücher's Army<sup>11</sup> in the West rather than guarding the frontier in the East and would be prepared to grant Japan all kinds of concessions in return.

In any event a policy of rearming China will become all the less acceptable to Japan the longer it continues, and it is not possible for us to pursue a policy against Japan in China such as even America and Britain are unable to undertake. We can only conduct a policy in China on the basis of an understanding with Japan—or at least without harming Japanese interests. Since the Hapro contracts are extremely harmful to Japanese interests, the day will come when Japan will confront us with a choice of alternatives. In that case we could only retreat. Whilst there is still time and whilst a conciliatory step on our part will still be valued as such by Japan, it would be better to reach an understanding with her. And for this there must be a frank discussion.

V[oss]

<sup>11</sup> i.e., the Soviet army in the Far East, whose commander was Marshal Blücher.

## No. 462

1833/418761-66

### *Memorandum by the Head of the European Section of the Political Department*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, July 20, 1936.  
Pol. I 1316.

Herr von Ribbentrop has telephoned a number of times and asked for material regarding the conference at Montreux. In agreement with Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff, who cannot at present be reached, I have today sent the Ambassador the memorandum of which a copy is attached. The special way in which it is drafted is partly due to questions on points of detail by the Ambassador, who particularly wished to be informed regarding the reasons for the British "defection".

Respectfully submitted herewith to the Foreign Minister.

WOERMANN

[Enclosure]

BERLIN, July 20, 1936.

### NOTE ON THE MONTREUX STRAITS CONVENTION

1. *The substance* of the Straits Convention is cogently set forth in the enclosed DNB report.<sup>1</sup>

The definitive official text is not yet to hand.

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

## 2. *Appraisal from the point of view of German interests.*

(a) The fact that, through the right to refortify the Straits, Turkey has regained her sovereignty must be welcomed from the German point of view, too, from the general aspect of equality of rights.

(b) From the point of view of naval strategy, on the other hand, the fortification of the Straits means, according to the R[eich W[ar] M[inistry]'s opinion, which is shared by the F[oreign] M[inistry], a deterioration of the present German position. First of all, in accordance with the various provisions of the Convention, the Russian Black Sea fleet can emerge in wartime, whilst the German fleet, on the other hand, is prevented from pursuit and from any actions at all in the Black Sea (unless Germany should possibly be taking part in actions as a League of Nations State). Still more important is the fact that up to the present the Soviet Union has in the main been obliged to leave the Black Sea fleet in the Black Sea to protect its own, Russian, coast. Now it can emerge, since the protection of the Black Sea will be undertaken by Turkey in consequence of the fortification of the Straits. The Soviet fleet can then proceed directly to the Baltic, or even relieve an enemy fleet, such as the French, in the Mediterranean, thus releasing the latter for use elsewhere.

All this applies only on the assumption that the Soviet Union remains in close relations with Turkey, as today. Should these relations be disrupted, then conversely Turkey, in consequence of the fortification of the Straits, could hinder or render impossible the egress of the Black Sea fleet.

(c) The provisions of the familiar clause in paragraph 2(c) of the German-British Naval Agreement are in any case not directly brought into play by the changed situation, since a new examination of the situation is therein provided for only if the overall balance of power at sea is materially disturbed by abnormal and extraordinary *building* measures.

It appears necessary, however, for the change in the strategic position at sea to be made unmistakably plain to the British Government, in order, in the first place, in this way to obtain material for strengthening our position in the current negotiations on the qualitative limitation of armaments. This material could also be important later for the German-British Naval Agreement, particularly in connexion with the increase in the Soviet-Russian building programme.<sup>2</sup>

At a discussion between the Foreign Ministry and the High Command

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Yes." Instructions were sent to the German Embassy in London in despatch Pol. I 1316 of Aug. 20, 1936 (1833/418767-69) to bring considerations of this kind to the attention of the Foreign Office, without making a formal *démarche* or lodging any German demands; similar instructions were being sent to the Naval Attaché. See also document No. 459.



of the Navy<sup>3</sup> it has therefore been agreed that such a step, at first without invoking clause 2(c) of the German-British Naval Agreement, should be dealt with in a form which still remains to be more closely defined.

On this occasion there was also considered the question of whether Germany should perhaps enter a general reservation in respect of the Straits Agreement. Such a reservation could be justified primarily on the grounds that Prussia-Germany has always been concerned in the Straits question as one affecting Europe and was only forced out of this position by the Versailles Treaty. The question as to whether such a formal step should be taken has not yet been decided.<sup>4</sup>

### 3. *The position of the individual Powers.*

(a) *Turkey* is, of course, the chief gainer. Through the refortification of the Straits and also through the abolition of the Straits Commission—quite apart from the juridical formula laying down the right of passage—she regains her old key position. It is therefore to be expected that the old pre-war competition for this key position will begin again, though it will of course, in consequence of the change in the general situation, the rise of the air force, etc., be played out in other forms.

(b) *The Soviet Union* gain at the same time as Turkey, as long as they continue to have close relations with her. The reservation in favour of an assistance pact in which Turkey takes part, does not, admittedly, take full account of the desire for express acknowledgement of the Soviet Russian-French Pact, but in essentials it comes to much the same thing. As stated above, this applies only so long as Turkey and the Soviet Union are on the same side.

(c) *Rumania*, through Titulescu, has been the real driving force behind the reservation in favour of regional pacts. It is self-evident that Rumania, after her French ally had been cut off in consequence of the refortification of the Rhineland, needed at least to keep the way through the Black Sea open. To this extent the settlement is a partial success for Rumania too.

<sup>3</sup> These discussions, which took place at noon the same day, were briefly recorded in an unsigned memorandum of July 20 (1638/390183-84). Present were Captain Ciliax, Commander Mössel and Counsellor Ehrhardt of the High Command of the Navy, Lieutenant Colonel Schellert of the Wehrmachtsamt, and Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff and others from the Foreign Ministry. Another, fuller, record of this meeting, by Captain Ciliax dated July 22 (7788/E559251-55), adds that a decision on the form in which the German reservations were to be presented to the British was left open. It was agreed that the Führer's approval must be obtained. Dieckhoff suggested that the High Command of the Navy should brief Bismarck on their views of the new Treaty whilst the latter was in Berlin.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "I should prefer to leave the first step to the Turks."



(d) Like the Soviet Union and Rumania, *France* too has cause to be satisfied with the settlement.

(e) *Italy* did not take part in the negotiations and she is reserving her attitude until the question of the Mediterranean Assistance Pact has been settled. It is open to her, as a Power signatory to the Lausanne Convention, to accede to the Convention. Newspaper reports that Italy has, in some form or other, recognized the Convention, are false.

(f) *Britain* has been able to carry virtually none of the demands which she brought forward during the negotiations and has reconciled herself to this. This is probably attributable mainly to the fact that the demands made by Britain were not put forward on grounds of specifically British interests but were, at least in part, as in the question of the Franco-Russian Pact, conditioned by the fear of yet further exacerbating the European situation and particularly of provoking a hostile German attitude. Britain's compliance is probably further attributable partly to her desire to achieve a convention whatever happened, if only to show by example that treaty revision is also possible by treaty methods. Whether it was intended to express *desintéressement* with regard to Germany, possibly in connexion with the other political questions, appears distinctly doubtful. In many British circles the Convention is regarded as forming a sort of Russo-Franco-British bloc as a counterbalance to an alleged German-Austrian-Hungarian (-Polish) bloc. This view appears, however, to be very highly-coloured.

(g) *The United States of America* are, as has been established by enquiry in Washington, not interested in the questions connected with the Convention, provided it does not affect the Merchant Navy. In this respect the United States appear to find the settlement unobjectionable.

(h) *Japan* has, by her participation in this conference, again taken an active interest in a European matter for the first time since her withdrawal from the League of Nations. Her interests were naturally in the direction of rendering more difficult the egress of Russia's Black Sea fleet. It appears, however, that despite her initial objections she will now sign.

(i) *Bulgaria* intended, up to the last moment, to make difficulties on account of the reservation in favour of a regional pact. At the present moment it is not yet quite certain whether she will sign with or without reservation.

WOERMANN

## No. 463

3610/E026927-29

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT PRIORITY

No. 146 of July 21

LONDON, July 21, 1936—5.54 p.m.

Received July 21—7:50 p.m.

Pol. I 1228.

Foreign Secretary Eden asked me to call this morning at the Foreign Office where he received me in the presence of Vansittart and handed me the following communiqué with the comment that he wanted to inform the Reich Government of its contents before it was made public by Baldwin in the House of Commons this afternoon.<sup>1</sup> The text of the communiqué is as follows:

"As a result of the exchange of views foreshadowed in the communiqué issued in Geneva on 4th July,<sup>2</sup> relating to a further meeting of the powers whose representatives drew up the London arrangement of 19th March, the Governments of France, Belgium and the United Kingdom have now decided to hold a meeting in London of their delegates on 23rd July. The object of this meeting will be to examine the situation and to consider how best to further the desire of the three Powers to consolidate the peace of Europe by means of a general settlement."<sup>3</sup>

Referring to statements already made to me by Vansittart,<sup>4</sup> Eden repeated with emphasis that the meeting of the remaining Locarno Powers had only been called for the purpose of discussing further procedure in relation to the Five-Power conference now envisaged. Referring to the text of the communiqué he stated that he himself had put the words "further the desire"<sup>3</sup> into the communiqué, in order thereby to make it known that the preliminary conversations were intended to serve only to pave the way for an understanding between the Five Powers. There was no question of any more far-reaching decisions of a material nature. All his efforts were directed towards bringing about a Five-Power conference and he hoped by these preliminary conversations to further this aim for which he was striving. To underline the formal nature of the conference, it was intended, in agreement with the French and Belgian Governments, to conclude the conversations as early as Thursday evening<sup>5</sup> and to publish that same evening a communiqué on their outcome; the short duration of the conversations would also help to

<sup>1</sup> For Baldwin's statement see *Parl. Deb. H. of C.*, vol. 315, col. 263.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 727, and document No. 428.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 451.

<sup>5</sup> i.e., July 23.

ensure that the press had no opportunity to indulge in extensive speculation as to their content. Blum and Delbos would participate on the French side, van Zeeland and Spaark [*sic*] on the Belgian.

Eden then expressed the hope that the German side would not be too sharply critical of the preliminary conference and added that he had observed with pleasure that the German press had so far exercised moderation. I replied that the German attitude would naturally depend on the outcome of the preliminary discussion, to which he replied that he quite understood this and asked for no more (I do not ask for more).<sup>3</sup>

When I asked whether I could assume from the words "the desire of the three powers"<sup>3</sup> that, besides Britain, Belgium and France also wanted to hold a Five-Power conference, Eden replied in the affirmative, adding that, from a number of conversations with Blum, he had gained the impression that the French Government urgently desired a German-French understanding. I then referred to the various press reports according to which, besides the five Powers, other Powers might perhaps also be drawn into the larger conference envisaged and asked Eden whether there really was any such intention, to which he replied that it would first be a question of holding a conference of the five Locarno Powers to agree on a new security system for Western Europe. Only then could one perhaps think of a more comprehensive conference. Once the results of the Three-Power conversations were to hand he hoped that it would soon be possible to proceed via diplomatic channels to preparations for Five-Power conversations. Eden made no mention of a possible date for the Five[-Power] talks.

Finally Eden said that he would ask me to call on him again on Friday, to inform me of the outcome of Thursday's conversations.

Immediately after my visit Eden received the Italian Chargé d'Affaires,<sup>6</sup> and I therefore assume that he made the same communication to him as he had made to me.

BISMARCK

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<sup>6</sup> L. Vitetti, Italian Counsellor of Embassy.

## No. 464

1638/390179-80

*The Acting State Secretary to the Embassy in Turkey*

Telegram

No. 106

BERLIN, July 21, 1936.  
Sent July 22—6:45 p.m.  
zu Pol. VII 876.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 125 of July 20.<sup>1</sup>

I leave it to your discretion [to express] the following points of view in conversations about the Straits Convention.

(a) Satisfaction that Turkey, having been released from the Lausanne obligations, can again exercise sovereignty over the Straits. Germany fully appreciates the success achieved by Turkey.

(b) The settlement regarding passage in time of war if Turkey is neutral appears to us to be extremely academic in character. Nevertheless, we are compelled to note that our position, compared with our previous one, has considerably deteriorated. This results from the fact that the Russian Black Sea fleet, which hitherto had to be left in the Black Sea for the protection of the Russian coast, can now emerge as Turkey, in consequence of the fortification of the Straits, can take over the defence of the Black Sea. We have no inclination to see German-Turkish relations through Litvinov's spectacles (particularly the final speech at Montreux).<sup>2</sup> The Turkish Government, however, cannot have failed to notice that some phases of the conference did not evoke a favourable response from German public opinion.

(c) Recognition of the new Straits Convention by us is, indeed, not being requested. The Straits question, however, remains a question of European interest; Germany must reserve her attitude to such settlements in which she has no part.<sup>3</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> This telegram (1638/390174) reads: "I would request your views on the Straits Convention as soon as possible for my guidance on language to be held." It bears the following marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "We do not wish to enter any formal protest, but must reserve all further steps and make it clear to the Turks that, for a statement of our views, they must come to us." See also document No. 468.

<sup>2</sup> See *Actes de la Conférence de Montreux, 22 juin-20 juillet 1936, Compte Rendu des Séances Plénières et Procès-Verbal des Débats du Comité Technique* (Liège, Paris, October 1936), pp. 181-182.

<sup>3</sup> A further paragraph, which was deleted before despatch, reads: "You should make use of the statements under (c) above cautiously and only if the matter is brought up in conversation by the Turkish side."



## No. 465

2381/498892-95

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A III 2 f 2

PRAGUE, July 21, 1936.  
Pol. IV 1783a.

## POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Henlein's visit to London.

I am informed through an excellent source of details of the visit paid to London a few days ago by the leader of the Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein.<sup>1</sup> First, Henlein had several unimportant discussions with members of the Royal Institute.<sup>2</sup> This made a luncheon with the [Under] Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Vansittart, all the more significant. Henlein had the opportunity to converse for three hours with this gentleman, of whose francophile inclinations and fundamentally unfriendly attitude to the Third Reich he was aware. Vansittart put to Henlein questions which showed him to be very well informed about conditions in Czechoslovakia.

I would like to say at this point that the First Secretary at the British Legation here, Hadow, whom I know well, was summoned to London by air about a week ago and, so he informed me, when he made his report in London adhered to the line which the British Legation here had adopted so far, which is to regard the Czech policy of suppression *vis-à-vis* the German minority as not only reprehensible but also foolish and a danger to peace.

Vansittart told Herr Henlein that he should consider his statements as representing the views of the British Government. In his opinion, the Austrian question could, at least for the present, be regarded as solved by the conclusion of the Berlin-Vienna agreement. Czechoslovakia, however, with her unsolved nationality problems, was still an open wound in Europe. He was pretty closely acquainted with the Sudeten German situation. Britain was, in principle, prepared to advise and help the Sudeten Germans. The British Government would take up the Sudeten German problem with the League of Nations. The British press would be charged to deal extensively with the Sudeten German problem in the near future.

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 68 of July 15 (3653/E033096) Eisenlohr reported: "Frank has just informed me that, as a result of an urgent invitation, Henlein is flying to London tomorrow and that Ambassador von Ribbentrop has been notified."

<sup>2</sup> The Royal Institute of International Affairs; see also document No. 508 and footnote 1 thereto.

Konrad Henlein then described to the [Under] Secretary of State the whole struggle of the Sudeten Germans for their rights and stated: "For three years I have preached an understanding; as I see the situation today, it will be almost impossible for me during the coming winter to continue to maintain calm and order among the broad masses of the Sudeten Germans, and I fear the worst." Henlein then described in detail the denationalization and other repressive measures of the Czech Government against the Sudeten-German community, particularly the devastating insecurity, the constant threats and the oppression of the Sudeten Germans which was to be expected as a result of the new so-called State Defence Law<sup>3</sup> and its executive provisions. July 11 of this year, the day when these regulations were promulgated, had been the day of doom for the Sudeten German economy. Henlein particularly drew Vansittart's attention to the existence and decisive influence of the parallel Government of the National Council in Czechoslovakia, which, with Beneš at its head and consisting of a few Czech Nationalists, ruled the state *de facto*, dictatorially, in a biased Czech-chauvinistic way, whilst the official Czechoslovak Government and Parliament were no more than a democratic cloak for the machinations of this body.

Henlein had the impression that Vansittart's very cordial language and his willingness to intervene on behalf of the Sudeten Germans could be attributed to his fear that the German population of Czechoslovakia, if it continued to feel oppressed and deprived of its rights to the same extent as hitherto, would be drawn more and more towards the Third Reich. Henlein assumes that Vansittart is intending, by means of a conciliatory attitude on the part of the British Government, to prevent even closer relations materializing between the Sudeten German community and the Reich, with the resultant increased influence of the Reich over the Sudeten Germans which would be bound to follow.

In my opinion we shall have to wait and see whether the "advice and help" which the British Government are offering will really bring about any easing of the situation for the Sudeten Germans or whether it is merely intended to effect with British assistance a new variant of the all too familiar Czech pacification and camouflage manoeuvres.

FHR. V. STEIN

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<sup>3</sup> This Act, which became law on May 13, 1936, established, *inter alia*, a frontier zone in which special restrictions were to be enforced. For further details see *Survey of International Affairs, 1936*, pp. 141-142, and 500-501. The relevant reports from Prague have been filmed on Serial 9144.

## No. 466

6719/E509922

*Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*[Excerpt]<sup>1</sup>AT LEINFELDEN, July 22, 1936.  
Pol. I. 1286.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: I flew back here yesterday afternoon from Bayreuth, after having had three long conversations with the Führer in the course of which I was able to discuss all urgent questions.

*Reply to the British questionnaire:*<sup>2</sup>

The Chancellor wants to go on putting off the reply to the questionnaire, particularly in view of the impending meeting of the remaining Locarno Powers. . . .

NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> The full text of the document here printed has not been found. For other excerpts made in the Foreign Ministry see documents Nos. 467 and 468, and vol. I of Series D, document No. 159.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.

## No. 467

1675/395028

*Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*[Excerpt]<sup>1</sup>AT LEINFELDEN, July 22, 1936.  
Pol. V 2114.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: I flew back here yesterday afternoon from Bayreuth, after having had three long conversations with the Führer in the course of which I was able to discuss all urgent questions.

*Danzig:*

The Führer has approved the reply to the projected Note from the Polish Government,<sup>2</sup> and especially the sentence at the end where it says that, with regard to the omission of the visit by the Commander of the *Leipzig*, there was no intention of acting against the Statute of the Free City of Danzig or the rights of Poland. You should now ask

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<sup>1</sup> The full text of the document here printed has not been found. For other excerpts made in the Foreign Ministry see documents Nos. 466 and 468, and vol. I of Series D, document No. 159.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 443, and footnote 2 thereto, and 473. For the texts of the Notes exchanged on July 24 (1675/395023-24 and 5809/E423699-700) see *League of Nations: Official Journal*, November 1936, p. 1334.

Lipski to come and see you and tell him this and show him our draft reply. If he has no further objections to it, the exchange of Notes can take place. For this purpose I enclose the copy signed by me, in which you would only have to insert the dates. You should, however, tell the Ambassador orally that, in the interests of German-Polish relations too, we no longer consider Lester's remaining in office for any length of time to be tolerable. We therefore ask the Polish Government to make suitable efforts in Geneva to obtain Lester's speedy disappearance, and in so doing to make use of our views. . .

NEURATH

### No. 468

1638/390175

*Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

[Excerpt]<sup>1</sup>

AT LEINFELDEN, July 22, 1936.  
zu Pol. VII 876.<sup>2</sup>

DEAR DIECKHOFF: I flew back here yesterday afternoon from Bayreuth, after having had three long conversations with the Führer in the course of which I was able to discuss all urgent questions.

#### *Straits Convention:*

A formal protest or reservation against the agreements reached at Montreux is not to be made for the time being. I am in favour, however, of our approaching the Turks about the matter and especially about their attitude, which we must regard as not particularly friendly towards us, and, if possible, of inducing them to notify us in some way of the convention and to request our views on it. We should then have the opportunity of putting forward our wishes. . . .<sup>3</sup>

NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> The full text of the document here printed has not been found. For other excerpts made in the Foreign Ministry see documents Nos. 466 and 467, and vol. I of Series D, document No. 159.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 464, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "Senior Counsellor Pilger. Please discuss. (Letter to Keller), [Dieckhoff], July 23." Attached to this document in the file is a memorandum by Pilger (1638/390176-78), dated July 24, and headed "Notes for a letter to Ambassador von Keller"; this is marked "Cessat" and bears the handwritten marginal note: "The Courier does not go again before next month. Therefore, if necessary, cipher letter and airmail." This memorandum contains arguments in the sense of document No. 462, enclosure.



## No. 469

6420/E479300-12

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in the United States*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, July 22, 1936

Drafting Officer:

Sent July 23.

Senior Counsellor Davidsen.

[zu] W VIIIa N.A. 505<sup>1</sup> V.

With reference to our telegraphic instructions.<sup>2</sup>

When, in the autumn of last year,<sup>3</sup> Germany was excluded from the favoured treatment which the United States have extended, in treaties concluded on the basis of the Trade Agreements Act,<sup>4</sup> not only to the parties to these treaties themselves but also—apart from minor exceptions—to all countries of the world with the exception of Germany, we refrained, in the interests of a possible future understanding, from drawing the logical conclusions, in regard to commercial policy, from this action and from stopping imports from the United States, perhaps by means of the possibilities offered by the wide range of administrative measures. On the contrary, in accordance with the verbal assurance given by me in Washington in September<sup>5</sup> and despite the present small foreign exchange coverage and the slenderness of our other means we successfully endeavoured not only to maintain imports from the United States but gradually to increase them. This is apparent from the trade statistics of the two countries and has also been repeatedly acknowledged from the American side. In the new situation brought about by the Treasury's decision of June 11<sup>6</sup> and after the failure of the attempt to come to a satisfactory settlement on the application of this decision, we can naturally no longer maintain this attitude or adhere to the assurance given at the time in Washington.

Despite the doubts which arise in relation to other countries out of a simple acceptance of the Treasury's decision, the competent depart

<sup>1</sup> W VIIIa N.A. 505 is presumably Washington telegram No. 173 of July 15 (6416/E478441).

<sup>2</sup> Evidently a reference to Ritter's telegrams Nos. 117 of July 20 (6420/E479303) and 118 of July 21 (6420/E479304-07) to Washington.

<sup>3</sup> The withdrawal of American most favoured nation treatment from Germany took effect on Oct. 15, 1935.

<sup>4</sup> The Act of June 12, 1934 to amend the Tariff Act of 1930; for the text see *The Statutes at Large of the United States of America*, vol. XLVIII, pp. 943-945.

<sup>5</sup> For Ritter's conversations in Washington in September and October 1935 see vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 331 and 332, and *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1935, vol. II, pp. 461-470.

<sup>6</sup> By its order T.D. 48360 of June 4, 1936, the U.S. Treasury Department gave notice that, pursuant to the provisions of section 303 of the Tariff Act of 1930 (for text of this section see *Foreign Relations of the United States*, 1934, vol. II, p. 402), countervailing duties would be collected on certain goods from Germany after thirty days following the publication of the order, which took place on June 11. For German representations about this order see *ibid.*, 1936, vol. II, pp. 227-234 and 241-250.

ments are, however, agreed that in the present circumstances we should refrain from applying maximum tariffs on American goods, so that we should not dissipate the slight possibilities which still remain of yet again getting into conversations with the Americans, perhaps after the Presidential elections.

To spare American sensitivities we will also refrain from announcing publicly other measures for the inevitable restriction of our imports from the United States. The control offices will, however, be given instructions to act on the following principles until further notice:

1) Foreign currency and acceptance credits will in principle no longer be made available for imports from the United States, except for goods the import of which into Germany is necessary for economic reasons.

2) Compensation transactions for which no urgent economic need exists on the German importing side will in principle no longer be approved, but instead only be permitted in exceptional cases. The decision on this in each individual case will no longer be made by the control offices; instead these will in every case submit the applications to the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics for its decision.

The appropriate instructions will not be issued in the form of decrees or even of official written directives, but will be given orally to the heads of the control offices. This is to avoid these measures appearing outwardly as reprisals.

The effect of these measures will, of course, soon begin to show in the trade statistics. Should this matter be raised with the Embassy you should confine yourself to the reply that such a drastic and renewed limitation of German exports must inevitably result in a corresponding restriction of German purchases in the United States.

The above measures will probably also have serious consequences for some American importers, including also some German firms in whose continued existence we have an economic or even political interest. You, in consultation with the Consulate General at New York, should bear this aspect of the matter in mind and if necessary report which firms and what goods should, in view of this, perhaps be given special consideration.

By order:  
RITTER

## No. 470

7790/E562759-80

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 671

LONDON, July 22, 1936.

SK 120 geh.

Subject: Naval negotiations. The British Memorandum in reply to the German Memorandum of May 4, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Robert Craigie asked me to call on him this morning in order, before he himself went on leave for some time, to communicate to me the British Government's Memorandum, which had now been prepared, in reply to the German Memorandum of May 4, 1936. It is enclosed.

We discussed the contents briefly, but nothing special was said about them.

Sir Robert Craigie touched briefly on the question of the Russian cruisers; and on the basis of your communication 1720 g of July 21,<sup>2</sup> which I had received just before my visit, I was able to inform him that we were compelled to describe the Russian cruisers with 18 cm. guns as 'A'-class cruisers.

A detailed discussion of this case and of the other questions was, however, adjourned owing to lack of time.

WASSNER

[Enclosure 1]<sup>3</sup>

FOREIGN OFFICE,  
22nd July, 1936.

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have given careful consideration to the memorandum, dated May 4th last, in which the German Government state that they are prepared to conclude with them a bilateral agreement on the basis of the Naval Treaty signed in London on March 25th, 1936, subject to certain specified conditions.

*Paragraph (2) of the German memorandum.*

2. The first of these conditions is that the German Government must have the right to withdraw from the agreement if no similar agreement is concluded between the United Kingdom and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The German Government do not insist that the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "SK 112/36 geh."; see document No. 459 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> This enclosure is in English in the original.

foregoing reservation should be embodied in the new agreement as a separate provision and would consent to its being treated as confidential.

3. The idea of a confidential understanding on this point has been found, on reflection, to present certain difficulties. For instance, it is held to be inappropriate to conclude an agreement with a clause providing for its entry into force at a certain time, and at the same time to agree confidentially that this date may, in certain circumstances, be postponed. In the event of postponement the failure of the agreement to come into force on the published date might be difficult to explain. Moreover, since this point was first discussed with the German Government, the situation has been eased by the inception of naval negotiations with representatives of the Soviet Government. In the circumstances, His Majesty's Government consider that the German reservation on this point could best be met by inserting in the agreement itself, a clause to the following effect:—

The present agreement shall come into force simultaneously with the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, and with the similar naval agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. The date on which the present agreement thus comes into force shall be immediately notified to the German Government by His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom. A draft article in these terms (Article 30) will be found in the printed document (Document C)<sup>4</sup> which is attached to this memorandum.

4. As regards the proposed Supplementary Protocol, His Majesty's Government desire to offer the following observations:

*Paragraph 3(a).*

5. It is noted that the formula regarding the age of German capital ships is acceptable to the German Government. As pointed out in the United Kingdom memorandum of the 13th May<sup>5</sup> last, which crossed the German memorandum under consideration, it is understood that the United Kingdom would have the same liberty as the German Government to replace capital ships at any age not less than 20 years in the circumstances mentioned in the formula. To take account of this

<sup>4</sup> Document C, which formed enclosure 4, is not printed (7790/E562782-88); it consisted of a printed draft of thirty articles of which 1-29 correspond *mutatis mutandis* with Articles 1-29 of the Naval Treaty of March 25, 1936. The text of the draft of Article 30 reads: "The present Agreement shall come into force on the 1st January, 1937, provided that on that date the Naval Treaty signed in London on the 25th March, 1936, comes into force. Otherwise the present Agreement shall come into force on such date after the 1st January, 1937, as the said Naval Treaty comes into force. This latter date shall, in that event, be immediately notified to the German Government by the Government of the United Kingdom."

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 323, enclosure 2.



understanding, it is therefore proposed that the formula on this point should be recast as follows:

It is agreed that the normal life of a capital ship should be twenty-six years. If, however, when the German or United Kingdom capital ships now building or projected are approaching the age of twenty years, the German Government or His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom represent that a Power has laid down a capital ship before the date at which such ship would normally be laid down in replacement of its existing capital ship tonnage, and that in consequence the retention of some or all of the German or United Kingdom ships to the age of twenty-six years is an unfair restriction, no objection would be raised by either party to their replacement at any age not less than twenty years.

*Paragraph 3(b).*

6. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom agree that the Supplementary Protocol should contain a statement that the German Government will continue to enjoy in future the same possibilities of construction in the quantitative field as those which existed on the conclusion of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June, 1935. They would be glad to know whether the wording of paragraph 8 of the United Kingdom memorandum of the 13th May in which His Majesty's Government expressed their understanding on this point is acceptable to the German Government.

*Paragraph 3(d).*

7. The German Government consider that it will be necessary to lay down in the proposed Supplementary Protocol that Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty of March 25th, 1936, does not affect the provisions of Section II of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 18th, 1935. In support of this view, the German memorandum contends that exceptional quantitative construction by other naval Powers would signify to Germany a change of circumstances even when the construction was kept within the qualitative limits prescribed by treaty, if it is of a character violently to disturb the balance of naval armaments.

8. His Majesty's Government are in some doubt as to the nature of the difficulty which the German Government have in mind. If it is the fear of the German Government that they will be unable to issue a supplementary programme of construction in respect of building by Powers to which the United Kingdom but not Germany will be bound by treaty, it will be seen from the text of Article 26 in the enclosed print that this fear is unfounded. Indeed Germany will, under that Article, enjoy an advantage in this respect over the United Kingdom,

seeing that Germany can, for the purposes of Article 26, take account of quantitative construction by countries in treaty relations with the United Kingdom, whereas the United Kingdom might in certain circumstances be precluded from so doing during the currency of an annual programme of construction or declaration of acquisition.

9. Possibly, however, the German Government have in mind the situation which would arise if a general naval treaty were later to be concluded or, alternatively, if the provisions in regard to exchange of information were to be applied, by mutual assent, as between all countries which had signed naval treaties on the new model. In that case it is not clear on what ground Germany could claim, on the basis of her existing naval treaty with the United Kingdom, a privileged position in respect to the application of Article 26 of the new treaty.

10. The clause of the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June, 1935, to which the German memorandum is understood to refer, provides as follows:

"If the general equilibrium of naval armaments, as normally maintained in the past, should be violently upset by any abnormal and exceptional construction by other Powers, the German Government reserve the right to invite His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom to examine the new situation thus created."

This clause would, of course, remain intact and the consultations for which provision is made would take place irrespective of anything contained in the new treaty now proposed. If, however, the purposes of the London Naval Treaty are to be carried out, it would seem to be essential that Germany should, like other contracting Powers—and to precisely the same extent as those Powers—agree not to issue in any year a second or supplementary programme based on the quantitative construction of countries with which she had concluded an agreement for the exchange of information.

11. His Majesty's Government trust that the explanations which have been given above will satisfy the German Government that their position under Article 26 of the proposed bilateral agreement is fully safeguarded, and that no special mention of this point requires to be made in the Supplementary Protocol. In the event of a more general application of the clauses relating to the interchange of information becoming possible, it is hoped that the German Government will be ready to assume the same obligations as those assumed by any other Power with which she has agreed to exchange information.

*Paragraph 5(a).*

12. The German Government request that His Majesty's Government should communicate to them the estimated tonnage figures for five years ahead, the next estimate to be made in 1940. His Majesty's

Government fear that, in the present uncertain state of world affairs, it may not always be possible to give a reliable estimate for so long as five years ahead. It is also for consideration whether after 1942, when Germany will have completed the construction which will give her a ratio of 35:100, and when the problem is likely to become one mainly of the replacement of overage tonnage, there will be the same need as at present for a long-term forecast. His Majesty's Government will, however, be prepared to give a definite undertaking to communicate confidentially to the German Government the estimated British tonnage figures, from 1942 onwards, at least two years in advance and, whenever possible, for a longer period. Should there be any modification in any particular forecast during the period for which it has been given, every effort will be made to give the German Government as much advance notice as possible.

*Paragraph 5(b).*

13. The German Government suggest a procedure for dealing with the difficulty arising from the fact that, under Part III of the London Naval Treaty of 1936, any increase in the building programme of Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations not announced in its last long-dated forecast could only be followed by Germany after one year's delay. His Majesty's Government appreciate the difficulty to which the German Government refer but, as stated in paragraph 10 above, they fear that any German proposal to alter an annual programme after it had been announced would be unacceptable to other Powers, should more general arrangements for the interchange of information later become possible. It is suggested, however, that the difficulty might be overcome if His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom were to undertake that, in the event of the naval construction contained in any particular annual programme of the United Kingdom being of a character to upset the long-term forecast of naval strength on which the German Government are working, the intentions of His Majesty's Government would be communicated confidentially to the German Government in sufficient time to enable them to make the necessary adjustments before the communication or publication of the German annual programme of construction or declaration of acquisition for that year. His Majesty's Government trust that this arrangement will be acceptable to the German Government.

14. If the German Government concur in the observations contained in paragraphs 4-13 above, the draft of an additional Protocol to the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June 18th, 1935, will be prepared and communicated to them. It is suggested that the proposed Protocol or Supplementary Exchange of Notes should deal with the points mentioned in paragraphs 5 and 6 above and that its scope might



be extended so as to include a summary of all those points in regard to the practical application of the 35% ratio on which agreement has been reached in the course of recent correspondence between the two Governments. A memorandum summarising those points is annexed herewith (Document A). As regards the points dealt with in paragraphs 12 and 13, it is suggested that they would suitably be dealt with in an agreed *procès-verbal* recording the final meeting between the representatives who have negotiated the proposed agreements.

*Paragraph 7.*

15. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom note with satisfaction that the German Government are prepared, in conformity with the assurance already given, to accede without reservation to Part IV of the Treaty of 1930 regarding the abolition of unrestricted submarine warfare against merchant vessels. Negotiations are at present proceeding with a view to the signature of a *Procès-Verbal* by the Powers parties to the Washington and London Naval Treaties under which His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom would be authorised to invite the acceptance by all Naval Powers of the rules contained in Part IV of the London Naval Treaty.

16. The concluding paragraphs of the German memorandum relate to a proposal of the German Government to retain the full sub-category A cruiser tonnage to which Germany is entitled under the Anglo-German Naval Agreement of June, 1935. His Majesty's Government have noted with much satisfaction, from the subsequent memorandum of the German Government communicated on the 10th instant,<sup>6</sup> that the German Government are prepared to meet the wish expressed by them and to forego [*sic*] the construction of the fourth and fifth A cruisers on the understanding that France and Russia do not lay down any further A cruisers before the Treaty comes into force. A further communication will be addressed to the German Government on this point by His Majesty's Government as soon as they have definite information of the intentions of the French and Soviet Russian Governments as regards construction in this sub-category.

17. In the hope that agreement may now be reached on the basis of the foregoing observations, the accompanying draft of an Exchange of Notes between His Majesty's Government and the German Government (Document B) has been prepared for the purpose of putting into force as between them the provisions of the London Naval Treaty of 1936. In preparing this draft and the annex thereto (Document C), regard has been had to the desirability of conforming as closely as is possible in the bilateral treaty to the text of the multilateral treaty of

<sup>6</sup> The reference would appear to be to the German Note of June 9, presented on June 11. See documents Nos. 361 and 366.



March 25th. Account has also been taken of the desire of the German Government that this agreement should be in the form of an Exchange of Notes. Owing, however, to the length of the London Naval Treaty, it has been found impracticable to embody the substance of the agreement in the notes themselves, so that it appears in the form of an annex. The form of an Exchange of Notes is, in the view of His Majesty's Government, better adapted to agreements of which the whole text can be embodied in the notes themselves, and for this reason His Majesty's Government believe that the form of an inter-Governmental agreement would be more appropriate to the present case. This is, moreover, the form which will probably be adopted in the case of the similar agreements which His Majesty's Government hope to conclude with other naval Powers. If, nevertheless, the German Government still maintain their preference for the form of an Exchange of Notes, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom will be prepared, once the questions raised in the present memorandum have been settled, to conclude an agreement in this form.

18. To recapitulate the preceding paragraphs, His Majesty's Government propose that, subject to a satisfactory settlement of the point in regard to sub-category (a) cruisers, there should be concluded between the two Governments an agreement in the terms of Document C, though they would prefer that this should be in the form of an inter-Governmental agreement. A Supplementary Protocol to the Anglo-German Naval Agreement, or a Supplementary Exchange of Notes, would at the same time be concluded dealing with the points mentioned in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the present memorandum and with the additional points mentioned in Document A attached hereto. The points mentioned in paragraphs 12 and 13 would, it is suggested, be most suitably dealt with in a Procès-Verbal recording the final meeting to be held between the German and United Kingdom representatives. His Majesty's Government would be glad to learn whether the above proposals are acceptable to the German Government.

[Enclosure 2]<sup>3</sup>

#### DOCUMENT A.

#### MEMORANDUM ON ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR INCLUSION IN PROPOSED PROTOCOL

##### *Transfer and Total Tonnage.*

Discussions have taken place as contemplated under paragraphs 2(d) and 2(g) of Sir Samuel Hoare's note dated the 18th June, 1935, and the following agreements have been reached:—

- (i) In the event of the proportion of 35 per cent. of the aggregate

capital ship tonnage of the fleet of the Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations working out in such a way that Germany, after building a certain number of capital ships of the maximum individual tonnage permitted by treaty, has an odd amount of tonnage left over, she will be allowed to subtract tonnage from the other categories and use it in the capital ship category, provided always that the German capital ship tonnage shall at no time exceed 35 per cent. of the British capital ship tonnage by more than half the tonnage of the maximum size of the capital ship allowed to be constructed by general agreement, namely the half of 35,000 tons.

(ii) The total departure from the 35 per cent. ratio in consequence of adjustments under paragraph 2(g) shall not in the aggregate, for all categories of vessels, exceed half the displacement of the largest capital ship permitted by treaty, and the duration of such an excess must not be more than ten years.

### *Age Limits.*

In order that the 35 per cent. ratio might be preserved in terms of fighting efficiency as well as tonnage, it was necessary to agree upon the normal age at which ships would be replaced, notwithstanding the fact that such age-limits are in no way binding upon other Powers in the absence of a general quantitative agreement. The German Government have agreed to adhere in general to the age-limits mentioned in the Naval Treaty of March 25th, 1936, subject to the following exceptions:

#### *Age Limit.* Years

- |   |    |
|---|----|
| (a) <i>Deutschland</i> class armoured ships.....            | 15 |
| (b) <i>Emden</i> and <i>Nürnberg</i> class of cruisers..... | 15 |
| (c) <i>Wolf</i> and <i>Moewe</i> classes of destroyers..... | 12 |

### *"Permanent" Over-age Tonnage.*

The United Kingdom enters the agreement with a substantial proportion of overage tonnage. The German Government have agreed that it would be contrary to the underlying principle of the agreement to match this tonnage by 35 per cent. of new German tonnage. So far as capital ships are concerned, the matter is not of prime importance, since the United Kingdom replacement programme will proceed more or less concurrently with Germany's new building. In the cruisers and destroyer categories, however, it is expected that a proportion of overage tonnage will be permanently retained. This "permanent" overage tonnage may amount to, say, 105,000 tons in the two categories together: a figure which would entitle Germany to approximately 36,750 tons.

The German Government, while pointing out that in the Agreement of June 18th, 1935, the German strength is fixed at a "percentage of 35 of the aggregate of the actual tonnage of the Members of the British Commonwealth of Nations", have agreed in principle to fill this part of their tonnage by overage vessels. There are, however, two practical difficulties. First, the German navy at present possesses no overage ships worthy to be counted. (It has been agreed that the fourteen old destroyers and torpedo-boats completed by Germany in or prior to 1913 cannot be reckoned in this tonnage.) Secondly, after the cruisers and destroyers built under the Versailles Treaty have become overage, they would have to be kept to abnormally great ages before they could be replaced on the "permanent" overage lists by ships under construction today. To meet the first difficulty the special age limits referred to above were agreed upon. To meet the second, it has been agreed that when the WOLF and MOEWE classes reach sixteen years, and when the EMDEN and NURNBERG classes reach from twenty to twenty-two years of age\* they shall be replaceable on the overage list by newer ships which shall be deemed to be "overage" for the purposes of the agreement. This arrangement shall continue in force until Germany has sufficient genuine overage tonnage to give her 35 per cent. of the British total.

These provisions have the effect of allowing Germany to attain her full 35 per cent. ratio in cruisers and destroyers by about 1945 and by 1955 the German cruisers and destroyers will consist exclusively of vessels built after the Anglo-German Agreement, by which date the first of such vessels will have become overage.

The assent of the German Government to these provisions is subject to the reservation that it may be revoked in certain special circumstances (e.g. stronger naval armaments of other naval Powers).

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\* Emden, 20 years; Karlsruhe, 20 years; Königsberg, 21 years; Köln, 21 years; Leipzig, 22 years; Nürnberg, 20 years.

[Enclosure 3]<sup>3</sup>

DOCUMENT B.

I

UNITED KINGDOM NOTE TO GERMANY

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to inform you that His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland are desirous of entering into an Agreement on a reciprocal basis with the German Government in order to make provision for the limitation of naval

armament, and for the exchange of information concerning naval construction.

2. I have accordingly the honour to propose an Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the German Government in the terms of the Articles set out in the Annex hereto; this Agreement to come into force on the date indicated in Article 30 in the Annex, and to expire on the date indicated in Article 27.

3. I have the honour to propose further:

(i) that if, before the coming into force of the Agreement referred to in the preceding paragraph, the naval construction of any Power, or any change of circumstances, should appear likely to render undesirable the coming into force of the Agreement in the form set out in the Annex hereto, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom and the German Government shall consult as to whether it is desirable to modify any of its terms to meet the situation thus presented.

(ii) that in the event of the Agreement not coming into force on the 1st January, 1937, the above-mentioned Governments shall, as a temporary measure, promptly communicate to one another, after the laying-down, acquisition or completion of any vessels in the categories or sub-categories mentioned in Article 12(a) in the Annex hereto, the information detailed below concerning all such vessels laid down between the 1st January, 1937 and the date of the coming into force of the Agreement, provided, however, that this obligation shall not continue after 1st July, 1937:—

Name or designation;

Classification of the vessel;

Standard displacement in tons and metric tons;

Principal dimensions at standard displacement, namely at waterline and extreme beam at or below waterline;

Mean draught at standard displacement;

Calibre of the largest gun.

4. In the event of the German Government being willing to enter into an Agreement as proposed in paragraph 2 hereof, and to accede to the proposals made in paragraph 3, the present Note and Your Excellency's reply thereto in similar terms, setting out in the Annex the German text of the Agreement referred to in paragraph 2 hereof, shall be regarded as placing on record the understanding arrived at between the two Governments on this matter.

I avail, etc.



## ANNEX

(See separate sheets)<sup>7</sup>

## II

## ANSWERING NOTE FROM GERMANY

Your Excellency,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Your Excellency's Note of this day's date and to inform you, in reply thereto, that the German Government are desirous, equally with His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, of entering into an Agreement on a reciprocal basis in order to make provision for the limitation of naval armament, and for the exchange of information concerning naval construction.

2. I have the honour accordingly to notify Your Excellency of the formal acceptance by the German Government of the proposal made in paragraph 2 of Your Excellency's Note under reference for an Agreement between the German Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom in the terms of the Articles set out in the Annex to Your Excellency's Note, the German text of which Articles is contained in the Annex hereto. This Agreement is to come into force on the date indicated in Article 30 in the Annex and is to expire on the date indicated in Article 27.

3. The German Government further agree

(i) that if before the coming into force of the Agreement referred to in the preceding paragraph, the naval construction of any Power, or any change of circumstances, should appear likely to render undesirable the coming into force of the Agreement in the form set out in the Annex hereto, the German Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom shall consult as to whether it is desirable to modify any of its terms to meet the situation thus presented.

(ii) that in the event of the Agreement not coming into force on the 1st January, 1937, the above-mentioned Governments shall, as a temporary measure, promptly communicate to one another, after the laying-down, acquisition or completion of any vessels in the categories or sub-categories mentioned in Article 12(a) in the Annex hereto, the information detailed below concerning all such vessels laid down between the 1st January, 1937, and the date of the coming into force of the Agreement, provided, however, that this obligation shall not continue after 1st July, 1937:—

Name or designation;

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<sup>7</sup> i.e. Document C.; see footnote 4 above.

Classification of the vessel;

Standard displacement in tons and metric tons;

Principal dimensions at standard displacement, namely at waterline and extreme beam at or below waterline;

Mean draught at standard displacement;

Calibre of the largest gun.

4. Your Excellency's Note of this day's date and the present Note in reply thereto shall be regarded as placing on record the understanding arrived at between the two Governments in this matter.

I avail, etc.

#### ANNEX

(German text of articles in Annex to  
United Kingdom Note.)

#### III

##### SUPPLEMENTARY UNITED KINGDOM NOTE TO GERMANY

Your Excellency,

With reference to the Notes exchanged between us this day, embodying an Agreement between His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the German Government for the limitation of naval armament, and for the exchange of information concerning naval construction, I have the honour, on behalf of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom, to express the hope that the system of advance notification and exchange of information will be continued by mutual accord after the expiration of the above-mentioned Agreement, and that it may be possible in any future agreement to achieve some further measure of reduction in naval armament.

I avail, etc.

#### IV

##### SUPPLEMENTARY GERMAN NOTE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM

Your Excellency,

With reference to the Notes exchanged between us this day, embodying an Agreement between the German Government and His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for the limitation of naval armament, and for the exchange of information concerning naval construction, I have the honour, on behalf of the German Government, to express the hope that the system of advance notification and exchange of information will be continued by mutual accord after the expiration of the above-mentioned Agreement, and that it may be possible in any future agreement to achieve some further measure of reduction in naval armament.

I avail, etc.

## No. 471

1872/423750

*Memorandum by an Official of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 23, 1936.

Pol. I 1302.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop's personal adjutant informed me this morning by telephone from Bayreuth as follows:

As a result of London telegram No. 138 of July 15<sup>1</sup> the Ambassador last night sent the following instructions to the German Chargé d'Affaires in London:

He foresaw in a Conference of Five, meeting in the immediate future, no hope of progress towards the consolidation of affairs in Europe. Instead, he thought that the conference must be most meticulously prepared if it were to promise success, i.e., that the problems of a new Western [system of] safeguarding peace must be clarified through diplomatic channels to such an extent that one need really only come to the [conference] table in order to sign.

If this did not happen then he was of the opinion that such a conference would break up again after a short time without result, and thus gives rise to fresh disappointment amongst the peoples. One should therefore be very cautious about the next step.

In the further course of his conversation with London, the Ambassador gave them to understand that in his opinion the only possible way of bringing about a Five-Power agreement in the West was through a clear, German-British understanding before hand.

Respectfully submitted to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff together with two copies of telegram No. 138.

BEHLAU

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 451.

## No. 472

1723/399545-51

*The Consulate General at Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

IG 889

DANZIG, July 23, 1936.

Received July 24.

Pol. V 2052

Subject: Danzig protest against the demonstrations by the Polish Maritime and Colonial League.

With reference to my reports IG 873 of July 18<sup>1</sup> and IG 887 of July 23.<sup>2</sup>

On July 22 President of the Senate Greiser invited the Polish Diplomatic Representative to a conversation, during which President Greiser entered a protest against the various demonstrations directed against Danzig by the Polish Maritime and Colonial League.<sup>3</sup> Minister Dr. Papée stated that the Polish Government had no influence on the demonstrations of an association which was independent of the Government. The President of the Senate and Minister Papée agreed to express the sincere desire of both sides for good relations in statements to the press. Minister Papée then mentioned, amongst other things, the domestic political decrees promulgated by the Senate.<sup>4</sup>

For the details I would refer to the memorandum on the conversation, a copy of which is enclosed, and also to the official Danzig statement to the press, which is also enclosed.<sup>5</sup>

The authentic text of the Polish statement to the Press is not in my possession. According to a press report, its wording is as appears in enclosure 3.<sup>6</sup>

ECKNER

[Enclosure]

DANZIG, July 22, 1936.

#### MINUTE

Minister Papée came to see me, at my request, from 11:30 to 12:30.

1) I began by repeating orally the Senate's condolences on the death of General Orlicz-Dreszer,<sup>7</sup> whereupon Minister Papée carried out his instructions to transmit to me the Polish Government's, and in particular Inspector-General Rydz-Smigly's thanks, for these condolences.

I then entered an official protest against the demonstrations by several Polish associations in Warsaw, Cracow, and other large Polish

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7590/E543426-28); in this Eckner reported that, on July 16, the Danzig Senate had deliberated upon a series of laws to enable more drastic action to be taken against the Opposition, and commented upon the ensuing enactments published in the *Danziger Gesetzblatt* No. 50, of July 18, 1936, a copy of which he enclosed.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7590/E543433-35); in this Eckner reported upon (1) the reception given to the Danzig Senate's new decrees both in Danzig and abroad, in particular the hostile criticism in the Polish press, and (2) a recent NSDAP function in Danzig which had included speeches by Gauleiter Forster and President Greiser, from which Eckner deduced that it was intended to increase Party influence on the Danzig Government's measures.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 458.

<sup>4</sup> See footnote 1 above; for some of these new measures taken by the Danzig Senate, see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, pp. 1365-1373.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (1723/399552).

<sup>6</sup> Not printed (1723/399553).

<sup>7</sup> Gen. G. Orlicz-Dreszer had been killed in an aeroplane accident on July 16, 1936, a few days after he had been appointed Inspector of Air Defence.



towns, which, by reason of the banners carried and the speeches made on these occasions, had been directed solely against Danzig, and I expressed surprise at these demonstrations, saying that they were calculated to disrupt the good relations between Danzig and Poland. I asked Minister Papée where the policy of the two Governments would end if, for example, the anti-Polish counter-demonstrations planned by the *Heimatdienst*<sup>8</sup> had in fact been permitted in Danzig by the Danzig Government. In order to demonstrate to him from the very outset the sincerity of the Senate's intentions, I had seen to it that these projected demonstrations did not take place. Minister Papée connected the demonstrations with the laws promulgated by the Danzig Government and said that the Polish Government had no influence on such things because they had, of course, been brought about by the Maritime and Colonial League, an association which was independent of the Government. I emphasized that it was known to me that, within the Polish Government too, there had been differences of opinion about the desirability of such displays, and that he would certainly understand it if I released a short press statement about my protest. We then agreed about a press statement in which, in the concluding sentence, the desire of both parties for good relations should be brought out as much as possible.

2) Minister Papée then came to speak of the internal political decrees promulgated by the Senate and asked me, on his Government's instructions, whether, on the basis of these decrees, I would negate the right of the League of Nations and its authorities to obtain information and exercise supervision. I then explained to him that:—

- a) I could state no such view as long as the League and its authorities had made no official request for any information;
- b) Neither opposition circles at home nor the High Commissioner himself had made these decrees an occasion to place the matter before the Council of the League of Nations;
- c) These decrees, in the opinion of the Senate and its constitutional lawyers, were entirely within the bounds of the constitution.
- d) The promise which I had given at the beginning of July, after my return from Geneva, that any measures against the opposition would only be promulgated within the framework of valid laws, had not been infringed by these decrees either;
- e) These decrees were in no way directed against the Polish minority or the rights of the Polish State in Danzig.

I then emphatically stated to Minister Papée that, particularly after the consultations which I had had with Minister Beck in Geneva<sup>9</sup> and those which, to my knowledge, Minister Beck had had with Minister-

<sup>8</sup> *Lit.* "Service of the Homeland", a German propaganda organization set up by the German Government towards the end of the first world war.

<sup>9</sup> See documents Nos. 430 and 434.

President Göring,<sup>10</sup> it was in the Polish Government's interests for the internal Opposition here to be so hamstrung that it would no longer be in a position to complain to any League of Nations authorities, since only thus would the authority and prestige of the National Socialist Government in Danzig be upheld and with it continued and enduring good relations between Warsaw and Danzig. In this connexion, I said, it was utterly incomprehensible to me how such mistaken ideas about what the National Socialist Government and Party in Danzig wanted could have appeared in the Polish press in the last few days. I also told him that I was much disturbed about this stirring up of feeling in Poland and that the Polish Government must do something betimes to counter this. I proposed to Minister Papée that, when consulting with Minister Beck, he might perhaps suggest that I should pay an official visit to M. Beck in Warsaw; this visit would then give official expression to the fact that the National Socialist Senate in Danzig had no intention at all of setting itself any anti-Polish objectives. Possible misunderstandings could also be cleared up on this occasion through official or perhaps unofficial visits to, or consultations with, other leading personalities.

Thereupon Minister Papée replied that he again wished to assure me, in accordance with his instructions, that the Polish Government were entirely disinterested in domestic developments in Danzig, but that I must realize that the little man in the street, that was to say public opinion, quickly pricked up his ears whenever there was talk of a threat to Polish rights, and this also included, of course, any intended alteration of the Statute. In connexion with this, he said, he must draw my attention to the articles published in the *Danziger Vorposten* and the speeches made by the responsible leader of the Party, Gauleiter Forster, and ask me whether the Senate identified itself with them. I replied that I did not know exactly which articles and speeches he meant. In so far as they concerned the question now raised in Geneva, I naturally identified myself with the Party, but it might sometimes happen that the Party, because of public opinion and the masses, was compelled to demand somewhat more than the Senate was subsequently able to do. That was a psychological matter of leadership of the masses, which he must surely understand, all the more so because in Poland herself the same means were, after all, employed, as was shown by the example of the demonstrations against Danzig. This statement satisfied Minister Papée, and he took up the idea of a possible visit to Warsaw and promised to speak in its favour to Minister Beck and to let me know Warsaw's opinion of it as soon as possible. Minister Papée then raised the question of what should form the basis for a possible exchange of views on the Danzig problem. I immediately seized upon this cue and told him that in my opinion such exchange of views between

<sup>10</sup> See also document No. 438.

Warsaw and Danzig ought to be set in train as soon as possible and that it would be a good thing to confront not only the authorities of the League of Nations but also other European States with the *fait accompli* that conversations about domestic developments in Danzig were taking place between Warsaw and Danzig. Danzig, I said, was ready to enter into such discussion at any time. Without wishing to modify the Statute with regard to the rights of Poland, it would in my opinion be possible to achieve an objective which could do justice to the wishes of both sides. Minister Papée then asked whether in that case the Danzig side too would accept the position of the High Commissioner, to which I replied that I could not yet commit myself on this. I told him that it would certainly be a good thing, and would ease the situation, if the present High Commissioner were replaced as soon as possible by someone who had the knack of disinteresting himself in internal politics.

I had the impression that Poland would like to negotiate with Danzig about these things.

3) I then referred to the protracted matter of negotiations about the use of the harbour, and asked that it be accelerated.

M. Papée told me that neither Minister Beck nor Minister Roman<sup>11</sup> had for their part anything against the commencement and/or continuation of these negotiations, and he thought that they would proceed in the very near future.

4) I reminded Minister Papée of a letter which I had written to him in April<sup>12</sup> to the effect that a sum of, if possible, 200,000 Złoty in customs revenues should be released in favour of the Winter Relief Organization [*Winterhilfswerk*] in order to safeguard this organization.

Minister Papée promised to take up this matter, which he had passed on to Warsaw.

5) I handed Minister Papée an *Aide-Mémoire*<sup>12</sup> regarding the railway employees' wages tax and pointed out that the situation was intolerable both financially and politically. He must, I said, urge that the Railway Administration should punctually fulfil its contractual obligations not only for the past but also for the future. Since he was not acquainted with the previous course of events, he promised to let me know about the matter in the course of the next few days.

6) I then mentioned the matter of the possible press publicity for the most recent railwaymen's agreement but Minister Papée wished to leave it at the communiqué which had been agreed upon between Staatsrat Büttner<sup>13</sup> and M. Klechnowski. This communiqué had, he said, apparently already appeared in the press.

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<sup>11</sup> Antoni Roman, Polish Minister of Industry and Commerce; see also document No. 458 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>12</sup> Not found.

<sup>13</sup> Danzig representative on the Railway Administration Board for Danzig.



7) With regard to the school questions I requested him to appoint an official who, together with Oberregierungsrat Köppen, the Landrat of Kreis Höhe, and the responsible Board of Surveyors' officials, should visit the school in Lonken in order to find a solution on the spot.

Minister Papée agreed to this.

8) I told Minister Papée that I should be glad if as many members of the Government and other high-ranking Polish personalities as possible would attend the opera in the woods at Zoppot, and I would ask him to tell me how many people would be attending on the appropriate days, since I would count it an honour to make available to him a corresponding number of tickets. Minister Papée was very pleased about this and said he would let me know later.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On July 23, the representatives of the remaining three Locarno Powers, Britain, France and Belgium, met in London and afterwards issued a communiqué in the following terms:

"The representatives of France, Belgium and the United Kingdom, having met in London on July 23, 1936,

Mindful of the arrangement of March 19, of the proposals of the German Chancellor of March 31, and of those of the French Government of April 8, have arrived at the following conclusions:

(1) The main purpose to which the efforts of all European nations must be directed is to consolidate peace by means of a general settlement.

(2) Such a settlement can only be achieved by the free cooperation of all the Powers concerned, and nothing would be more fatal to the hopes of such a settlement than the division, apparent or real, of Europe into opposing *blocs*.

(3) The three Governments accordingly consider that steps should be taken to arrange a meeting of the five Locarno Powers as soon as such a meeting can conveniently be held. The first business to be undertaken should, in their opinion, be to negotiate a new agreement to take the place of the Rhine Pact of Locarno, and to resolve, through the collaboration of all concerned, the situation created by the German initiative of March 7.

(4) The three Governments accordingly propose to enter into communication with the German and Italian Governments with a view to obtaining their participation in the meeting thus proposed.

(5) If progress can be made at this meeting, other matters affecting European peace will necessarily come under discussion. In such circumstances, it would be natural to look forward to the widening of the area of the discussion in such a manner as to facilitate, with the collaboration of the other interested Powers, the settlement of those problems the solution of which is essential to the peace of Europe."]



## No. 473

5818/E423946-49

*Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff to Ambassador Moltke*

BERLIN, July 24, 1936.

DEAR MOLTKE: Now that the Foreign Minister, during his stay in Bayreuth, has obtained the agreement of the Führer and Chancellor to the new version of the German Note,<sup>1</sup> I asked M. Lipski to call on me yesterday, and discussed the matter with him. He thinks that the new text will meet with the approval of his Government and wishes to undertake the exchange of Notes with me at midday today. There is no question of publication for the time being. The Polish Government are to report to Geneva about the execution of the task assigned to them, and the Secretariat of the League will then probably, after some lapse of time, publish the exchange of Notes. I did not fail, in accordance with the [Foreign] Minister's instructions, to point out to M. Lipski that we expect the Polish Government to make efforts to obtain the speedy removal of Mr. Lester. The Ambassador promised that his Government would do everything possible, but he thought that the matter was rather more difficult now than a year ago when everything had already been agreed between M. Beck and Herr Göring, and then at Geneva Herr Greiser had been in favour of Mr. Lester's tenure of his post being prolonged.<sup>2</sup> Whether these last statements are correct I am not able to say, but M. Lipski is probably right in saying that resistance to the removal of Mr. Lester will now be greater than before the most recent incidents. We were in entire agreement on one point: that any damage to German-Polish relations must be avoided. I realize, however, that this will not be altogether easy.

The remaining Locarno Powers are to notify us today of the text of the communiqué agreed upon in London yesterday.<sup>3</sup> Our view is that, although we regarded the holding of the Three-Power Conference as an unnecessary and mistaken method, we would not refuse to participate in a discussion on the preparation of a Five-Power Conference based on real equality of rights and for the time being concerned exclusively with a Western Locarno. This discussion must, of course, not be rushed; only if the discussion is prepared with calm deliberation on the part of all five Powers will there be any prospect of a positive result.

We are at present particularly troubled by the position of Reich nationals in Spain. There are nearly 15,000 Reich Germans in Barcelona, Madrid, Bilbao, etc. and the situation in some places has already

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 467.

<sup>2</sup> Greiser had been present when, on May 13, 1936, the Council of the League of Nations adopted a resolution to extend the High Commissioner's tenure of his post for another year (see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, June 1936, pp. 543-544). See also document No. 476.

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

become really critical. We have therefore already proposed to the Navy, a few days ago, that warships be sent to Spain to protect the Germans and, if need be, to bring them away; two fairly large vessels are putting to sea early this morning for Spain. As regards French sales of arms to the Spanish Government we have completely reliable information;<sup>4</sup> perhaps the Embassy will have an opportunity of giving this matter something of an airing before the public at your end.

Woermann tells me that you would like to start your leave now. We are in entire agreement with this, particularly since the Danzig affair has reached a certain provisional conclusion and since in other respects it may be hoped that a kind of Olympic peace<sup>5</sup> will prevail in politics during the next few weeks. I wish you a good holiday.

Copies of the draft of the Polish Note and of the draft of the German Note in reply are enclosed herewith.<sup>6</sup>

With cordial greetings,

I remain, Yours ever,

DIECKHOFF

<sup>4</sup> See also Series D., vol. III, document No. 3 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> The Olympic Games were being opened in Berlin on August 1, 1936.

<sup>6</sup> Not printed; see document No. 467, footnote 2.

## No. 474

3317/E007734

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, July 24, 1936.

Pol. I 1340.

The French Ambassador, the Belgian Minister<sup>1</sup> and the British Chargé d'Affaires<sup>2</sup> called on me together this morning at 11 o'clock and communicated to me, on instructions from their Governments, the French and English texts of the tripartite agreement<sup>3</sup> reached yesterday in London; at the same time they communicated to me more or less identical Notes<sup>4</sup> in which the hope was expressed that the German Government would return a favourable reply to the invitation to a Five-Power Conference, so that a date could be fixed for this Five-Power Conference in the shortest possible time and "*d'un commun accord*". M. François-Poncet, who spoke for the three gentlemen, added nothing of importance orally, but did emphasize briefly that they had had the intention of communicating the document yesterday evening, so that the German Government should not learn of the text from the press.

<sup>1</sup> Jacques, Vicomte Davignon.

<sup>2</sup> Basil Newton.

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (5948/E437702-03; 08-09); these texts are identical with the communiqué of July 23, for which see Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (5948/E437701; 04; 07).

I told the gentlemen in reply that I would pass on the text of the tripartite resolution, as well as the Notes communicated to me, to the Foreign Minister and that I must, for the time being, reserve my Government's statement of views. Personally, I thought I could already say that we viewed the *démarche* with sympathetic interest, at least in so far as it concerned the objective of restoring a new peaceful system in Western Europe. I thought, however, that much diplomatic preparation and fundamental clarification of the matter to be negotiated upon would still be required before such a discussion could take place.

The gentlemen then proposed the publication of a communiqué on the conversation which, in view of the great political interest in the *démarche*, I could not well refuse. The attached text was agreed upon and was then handed to the press at 12 o'clock.<sup>5</sup>

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>5</sup> Not filmed; for the text of the communiqué see the *Völkischer Beobachter* of July 25, 1936.

## No. 475

3618/E027226-27

*Foreign Minister Neurath to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

at LEINFELDEN, July 24, 1936.

Pol. I 1374.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: This morning after our telephone conversation<sup>1</sup> and before publication of the communiqué,<sup>2</sup> I informed the Führer about the invitation to the Locarno Conference and at the same time told him that we ought to reply in the first half of next week. In the meantime you should have the invitation studied by the Departments and have a draft for a reply prepared. As I have already told you, I shall be in Berlin on Wednesday morning.<sup>3</sup>

As soon as Papen's appointment is completed and his letter of appointment despatched to him, the publication in the press proposed by you in your letter of July 22<sup>4</sup> can take place. Shortly beforehand it would be advisable to inform Herr Tauschitz<sup>5</sup> personally and at the same time to tell him that the appointment is a special honour bestowed on Papen for his services in bringing about the German-Austrian Agreement.<sup>6</sup> It would also be desirable to inform our Missions in the same sense.

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<sup>1</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 474 and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., on July 30.

<sup>4</sup> Not found; this evidently referred to Papen's promotion to the rank of Ambassador.

<sup>5</sup> Stephan Tauschitz, Austrian Minister in Berlin.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

Should the representatives of the Locarno Powers wish to speak to me after my return, I shall be at their disposal on Thursday.

With best wishes,

Yours,

NEURATH

No. 476

1675/395029-34

*Ambassador Moltke to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff*

WARSAW, July 24, 1936

Pol. V 2241.

DEAR DIECKHOFF: Many thanks for your very interesting letter of today's date.<sup>1</sup> It is exceedingly gratifying that the affair of the Notes has now been settled in a satisfactory way.

I send you (enclosed) my memorandum on a conversation which I had yesterday with M. Beck. I had intended to supplement the memorandum by word of mouth and for this purpose to travel via Berlin when starting my leave, which you have now been kind enough to approve; I should arrive there on Monday. If this is agreeable to you I should be grateful if you would have me informed by telephone tomorrow. If not, there might perhaps be an opportunity for a conversation on the occasion of the opening of the Olympic Games,<sup>2</sup> for which I wanted to come to Berlin. But perhaps, after all, that would be rather late!

With cordial greetings,

I remain, Yours ever,

MOLTKE

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM

WARSAW, July 23, 1936.

I had an opportunity today of seeing M. Beck, who has interrupted his leave and has been spending two days in Warsaw. After a few friendly words about the German condolences on the death of General Orlicz-Dreszer,<sup>3</sup> M. Beck immediately went on to speak of the Danzig question. He observed that difficulties had already frequently arisen in Danzig but that he was more worried this time than on the occasion of the earlier incidents, and that he had a feeling that the present complication might easily affect German-Polish relations as well. He

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 473.

<sup>2</sup> The Olympic Games were being opened in Berlin on August 1.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 472, footnote 7.



had, he said, taken the view from the very beginning, as he had indeed told Minister President Göring on the occasion of their most recent conversation,<sup>4</sup> that the incident caused by the visit of the *Leipzig* must be treated in a way which would completely eliminate the possibility either of damage to the prestige of the Reich Chancellor or of harm to German-Polish relations. It was more than ever to be observed that German-Polish collaboration had proved its worth and that it had prevented developments which might have become extremely dangerous. Consequently, precisely at this moment, it was important and necessary to maintain good relations. One only needed to glance at the press of certain countries in order to observe what high hopes were being attached to the present incident by those to whom German-Polish collaboration was inconvenient. Thus there was all the more reason to do everything to frustrate these hopes. He was therefore very pleased that the Note on the *Leipzig* affair had been answered today, and that in a manner which from the Polish point of view could be regarded as adequate and satisfactory. In Geneva the settlement which had been achieved would certainly not please all the members of the Council, especially not the representatives of those countries where Marxist influence was strong. But he assumed that he would succeed in disposing of the matter.

I asked M. Beck what he thought about future developments and in particular what were his views as to Mr. Lester's remaining. M. Beck admitted that further cooperation between the Senate and Lester would be extremely difficult, if not indeed impossible. But his removal would naturally be an extremely ticklish matter, as was always the case when it was a question of prestige. At present he could not yet see any real way out. Perhaps it would have been possible to allow Mr. Lester to disappear sooner or later if the new Danzig decrees<sup>5</sup> had not intervened, but these would in all probability enable Mr. Lester to resume his activities before the forum of the League of Nations. The Danzig Senate was indeed contending that the new decrees contained no infringement of the Danzig Statute, but it was in fact very difficult to justify this view in law. As far as the Polish attitude was concerned, it would perhaps be possible to hold the opinion that, in view of the general statements which Herr Greiser had made,<sup>6</sup> Polish interests would not be harmed by the new decrees. Poland for her part did not therefore intend to take the initiative in causing the Council to be seized of the matter, but he assumed that Mr. Lester would do this. What attitude Poland would then adopt he could not yet foresee.

I put it to M. Beck that, if Mr. Lester were to remain, this could

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 438.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 472, with footnotes 1 and 4 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> Presumably a reference to statements made by Greiser to Papée; see document No. 472, enclosure.

not but cause fresh complications. M. Beck fully sympathized with this view but referred again to the great difficulties which stood in the way of putting it into practice, and expressed his regret that at the May meeting of the Council Herr Greiser, in spite of the express agreement, had advocated an extension of Lester's period of office.<sup>7</sup>

When, in the course of the conversation, I touched upon the possibility of abolishing the institution of the League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig, M. Beck did not reject this eventuality as unconditionally as one might perhaps have been led to expect in view of the attitude which Polish public opinion has adopted in this question. On the other hand he also pointed out the great difficulties which stood in the way of such a settlement now that this institution had been created and now that large circles both at home and abroad—whether rightly or wrongly he did not want to enquire into at the moment—considered the maintenance of this institution necessary. But even if it were to prove possible to discuss this question too, this could at the most be done only in a calm atmosphere, and not when one must daily expect to be surprised by fresh incidents and developments. M. Beck emphasized that nothing was further from his thoughts than to place difficulties in the path of the German community in Danzig or of the development of the National Socialist Party in Danzig. Fortunately, relations between Herr Greiser and M. Papée had been entirely friendly hitherto. Only yesterday another long and very detailed conversation had taken place between them; so far he had only superficial information about its outcome. He would, however, be going back to Gdynia this evening to continue his leave. Perhaps after the report which M. Papée was to make to him there tomorrow he would see more clearly what should be done in the present situation.

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 473, and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 477

3618/E027220-23

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

MOST URGENT

PRIORITY

No. 149 of July 24

LONDON, July 25, 1936—00:03 a.m.

Received July 25—3:15 a.m.

Pol. I 1321.

The Foreign Secretary, Eden, asked me to call on him today, as arranged,<sup>1</sup> in order to inform me of the substance of yesterday's Locarno conversations. Eden began by saying how pleased he was that the

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 463.

British hope that it would be possible to bring the conversations to a successful conclusion in one day had been realized. He regarded the communiqué<sup>2</sup> as a promising contribution towards the tranquillization of the international situation and he thought that it had proved possible yesterday "to cut away a lot of dry wood".<sup>3</sup> In the main this could be ascribed to the compliant and conciliatory attitude of the French delegates. The impression which he had gained in previous conversations with Blum had once more been confirmed, namely, that the Blum Government were motivated to a greater extent than probably any previous French Government by the desire to achieve an understanding with Germany.

Eden then turned to the text of the communiqué and stated that he was primarily concerned with clarifying a phrase which, perhaps, might otherwise lead to misunderstandings. The words in question were: "through the collaboration of all concerned",<sup>3</sup> which come in the second sentence of paragraph three of the communiqué. These words had been included in the communiqué on British initiative, but he had afterwards really rather regretted having inserted them, as they might not appear altogether clear. This "collaboration of all concerned" was meant to imply that the collaboration of Germany and Italy, i.e., of all the Locarno Powers, was desired; not that perhaps yet other Powers ought to be drawn into the discussions on the Western Pact. These words had been intended as a friendly gesture towards Germany and Italy, and indeed the whole communiqué was, as he had already stated yesterday evening to the press representatives, most carefully designed to avoid giving offence of any kind, particularly to Germany.

He said, taking the whole of the second sentence of paragraph three, that the fact that mention was made not only of a new pact but also of clarifying the situation created by the German action of March 7, could also be attributed to British initiative; it meant that it was desired to clear up the whole situation at one go without leaving . . . (group mutilated) behind. On this point Eden's actual words were: "We want to get the whole thing out of the way without leaving any legal or other claims behind."<sup>3</sup>

He said that just as it was apparent from the whole communiqué that care had been taken not to anticipate material decisions in any way, and that therefore nothing was said about either the place or the time for a conference, thus, too, paragraph 5 in particular had intentionally been left vague. The words in the second sentence of paragraph 5 "it would be natural to look forward"<sup>3</sup> had been substituted by the British Government for the words proposed by the other Powers: "the three Powers would look forward"<sup>3</sup>. This alteration too was entirely

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.



due to the fact that the British had been at pains to find a form of wording kept as general as possible. He had noticed that the word "natural" had been taken up by the German press but in fact the word bore no greater significance than the intention described above.

Eden then informed me that a joint *démarche* had been made by the representatives of the three remaining Locarno Powers both in Berlin and in Rome this morning, for the purpose of inviting Germany and Italy to participate in the proposed conference.<sup>4</sup> He then read out to me the text of the communiqué issued by the [German] Foreign Ministry<sup>5</sup> about the said visit and expressed lively satisfaction over one phrase it contained, namely that the *démarche* had been received with interest and sympathy.

With regard to further procedure, Eden thought that the replies of the German and Italian Governments must first be awaited. When I asked about the Italian attitude, Eden replied that lacking information he could not yet tell me anything definite. He could, however, tell me in strictest confidence that, probably within the next few days, the still existing mutual assistance agreements between Britain and Turkey and Britain and Yugoslavia in the Mediterranean<sup>6</sup> would be terminated; as a result of this he had firm hopes of receiving a positive reply from Italy.

Once affirmative replies had been received from the German and Italian Governments, thorough diplomatic preparations for the Conference would be necessary. I took this opportunity to point out that this point in particular was of decisive importance to us. I said that during a telephone conversation with me the day before yesterday Ambassador von Ribbentrop<sup>7</sup> had stressed that in the German view it was necessary to make such thorough diplomatic preparations for any conference of this kind that the conference itself would only need, so to speak, to draw the final stroke under the agreements, as under no circumstances should any such conference possibly be allowed to end in failure. To this Eden entirely agreed, adding that he did not imagine that these diplomatic negotiations would be too difficult. But however necessary it was to have thorough preparations, it would none the less be a mistake to protract these for too long, and thus let slip the present psychologically favourable moment. He did in fact believe that an opportunity now presented itself, such as there had never yet been since the war, of bringing about an understanding between the five great Powers of Western Europe, and he hoped that the German side also shared this

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 474; for Ciano's record of the corresponding *démarche* in Rome see Galeazzo Ciano: *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe* (Milan, 1948), pp. 41-42 (English translation: *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, ed. Malcolm Muggeridge (London, 1949), p. 19).

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 474, footnote 5.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 449, footnote 3.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 471.



view. Eden said he was well satisfied with the German press comments on the communiqué which had so far reached him.

Eden expects a comparatively calm period until the end of September and both he and Cranborne<sup>8</sup> intend to go on leave for four weeks at the end of the coming week when Parliament adjourns.<sup>9</sup>

BISMARCK

<sup>8</sup> Viscount Cranborne, Parliamentary Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

<sup>9</sup> A copy of this document was sent by air courier to the Embassy in Rome under cover of despatch zu Pol. I 1321 Ang. II of July 27 (7436/E540120).

## No. 478

3618/E027218-19

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 118 of July 25

ROME, July 25, 1936—4:45 p.m.

Received July 25—8:45 p.m.

Pol. I 1320.

During today's conversation with Ciano<sup>1</sup> I informed him, on the basis of my telephone conversation with Dieckhoff,<sup>2</sup> of the communication in Berlin of the Three Powers' statement<sup>3</sup> and informed him of the German view in principle. Ciano replied that our standpoint fully accorded with that of Italy. He had replied to the representatives of the Three Powers<sup>4</sup> that Italy reserved her views until the question of the Mediterranean agreements<sup>5</sup> had been settled; at the same time he had again stressed the need for German participation. This latter question had now been settled in a positive sense. The former would, he hoped, be settled on Monday evening<sup>6</sup> equally satisfactorily, since Eden, in accordance with an agreement with the Italian Government, would, after Italian declarations had been made to Belgrade, Athens and Ankara (cf. my report No. 3530 of the day before yesterday)<sup>7</sup> on Italy's friendly intentions and the absence of any thought of reprisals against these countries, be announcing the termination of the Mediterranean agreements, also in so far as they took the form of a unilateral British obligation.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For Ciano's account of this conversation, see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 42-44 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 20-21).

<sup>2</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 474.

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 477, with footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 403, footnote 4.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., July 27.

<sup>7</sup> Not printed (1486/368510-18). In this despatch of July 23 Hassell reported that Italy, in accordance with British advice, had made the declarations indicated in the document here printed in the confident expectation that Britain would then declare the Mediterranean Agreements to be at an end.

<sup>8</sup> A declaration to this effect was made by Eden in the House of Commons on July 27. See document No. 449, footnote 3.

Now that these two questions had been answered in a positive sense, the Italian view was that an attempt should be made to reach successful results at a Five-Power conference, for which, in agreement with the German view, he regarded a prior exchange of views through diplomatic channels, especially between Italy and Germany, as necessary. The course which the matter had so far taken again demonstrated the parallelism between important German and Italian interests and the favourable effect that this parallelism, bound up as it was with mutual confidence, had already had in the development of affairs.

Conditions in Spain, on the other hand, were extremely alarming when viewed in conjunction with the systematic and dangerous activity of Soviet Russia in Western Europe and the favour shown to the Spanish Left-wing Government by the French Government. If it was proved that the French Government were giving the Spanish Left-wing Government effective support through deliveries of arms, etc., then events in Spain could lose their domestic Spanish character and cause other Governments, as for example Italy, to be confronted with fresh decisions. Thus the necessity could arise of protesting in Paris against the conduct of the French Government.

As far as the protection of foreign interests in Spain was concerned, Italian naval and merchant ships were already on the spot. As German as well as Italian interests were clearly a special target for Communist attacks, he would direct Italian naval units to place themselves at the disposal of the German consular authorities in Barcelona in the event of serious danger to German interests arising before the arrival of the German ships.<sup>9</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>9</sup> For documents on German foreign policy and the Spanish Civil War, see vol. III of Series D.

## No. 479

1946/485688

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 117 of July 25

ROME, July 25, 1936—4:50 p.m.

Received July 25—7:30 p.m.

Pol. VII 954.

With reference to your telegram No. 159 of July 24.<sup>1</sup>

I have today informed Foreign Minister Count Ciano as instructed. Ciano expressed lively gratification at the news which, he said, was fresh proof of the growing friendship between the two countries. The Italian

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7215/E530110); in this telegram the Embassy in Rome was instructed to ask the Italian Government for their agreement to the establishment of a German Consulate General at Addis Ababa to replace the German Legation there.

Government were of course in full agreement with the establishment of a Consulate General and of German Consulates in Ethiopia; he could also assure me that, especially after this decision by Berlin, German interests in Abyssinia would be safeguarded with particular care, just as all economic questions arising from German activities in Abyssinia would be studied with the greatest benevolence and in the spirit of friendship. I took the opportunity of carrying out the instructions in your despatch Pol. VII 698 of July 16<sup>2</sup> whilst . . . (group appears to be missing) Pro Memoria; Ciano promised to give it immediate and benevolent study.

The Italian Government are publishing a brief communiqué concerning my statement about the Legation and Consulate General, in which they express satisfaction and gratitude.

HASSELL 3

<sup>2</sup> In this despatch (7215/E530102-04) the Embassy in Rome was instructed to ascertain why re-entry into Abyssinia had been refused to a number of German citizens, formerly resident there.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 478 and footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 480

6008/E443235

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV*

BERLIN, July 25, 1936.

Pol. IV 1845.

A discussion took place yesterday at the Bureau von Kursell<sup>1</sup> with Herr Frank,<sup>2</sup> Conrad Hehnlein's [*sic*]<sup>3</sup> representative, at which Professor Wehoffsich [*sic*]<sup>4</sup>, Regierungsrat Krebs<sup>5</sup> and Counsellor of Legation Altenburg were also present. The possibilities of obtaining unity among the Sudeten Germans were discussed and the hope of all the authorities concerned expressed to Herr Frank that Herr Hehnlein [*sic*] might soon succeed in finding a solution which would restore peace within the Sudeten German camp. Furthermore, the hope was also expressed that an end might be put to the incessant publication of declarations and counter declarations in the Sudeten German press, which in no wise contributed towards a *détente* in the situation. Herr Frank is returning to Prague today and will be back in Berlin at the beginning of next week, after discussions with Herr Hehnlein [*sic*], in order to inform the authorities here of the views and intentions of his Party's leader. Efforts will be made to achieve a reconciliation between

<sup>1</sup> For details of Professor von Kursell's office, which dealt with certain *Volksdeutsch* matters, see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 549 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Karl Hermann Frank; see document No. 364, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> Konrad Henlein, leader of the Sudeten German Party.

<sup>4</sup> Professor Wehoffsich, on the staff of the Führer's Deputy; see also document No. 364 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> Hans Krebs; see document No. 364, footnote 8.

Hehnlein [*sic*] on the one hand and Caspar [*sic*]<sup>6</sup> and Kreissl<sup>7</sup> on the other before the Olympic Games,<sup>8</sup> i.e., before Herr Hehnlein [*sic*] arrives in Berlin as the guest of the Reich Government.

ALTENBURG

<sup>6</sup> Rudolf Kasper; see documents Nos. 364 and footnote 2 thereto, and 372, enclosures.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 364 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>8</sup> The Olympic Games were being opened in Berlin on August 1, 1936.

## No. 481

1652/392159-60

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 138 of July 26

TARABYA, July 26, 1936—2:40 p.m.

Received July 26—6:40 p.m.

Pol. VII 951.

From a conversation of some length with Tewfik Ruschdy<sup>1</sup> and the hitherto acting Foreign Minister, Saraçoğlu,<sup>2</sup> during which I put forward the points of view contained in [your telegram] No. 106,<sup>3</sup> I would draw attention to the following:

Both admit that Article 19 in particular is largely academic in character:<sup>4</sup>

It was hardly possible for war to be waged anywhere in Europe without this very soon causing Turkey, if not to be involved, then at least to assert that the danger of imminent war existed and thus to obtain full control of [rights of] passage through the Straits. Even though this might in practice diminish the significance of Article 19 (paragraph 2 of which Turkey and Britain had jointly opposed but had finally been compelled to accept in order to rescue the negotiations in the face of France and Russia), yet the inclusion of the case of a pact of

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Tewfik Rüstü Aras, Turkish Foreign Minister.

<sup>2</sup> Sükrü Saraçoğlu, Turkish Minister of Justice, 1932-1938.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 464.

<sup>4</sup> Article 19 of the Montreux Convention reads: "In time of war, Turkey not being belligerent, warships shall enjoy the complete freedom of transit and navigation through the Straits under the same conditions as those laid down in Articles 10-18.

"Vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers shall not, however, pass through the Straits except in cases arising out of Article 25 of the present Convention, and in cases of assistance rendered to a State victim of aggression in virtue of a Treaty of mutual assistance binding Turkey, concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and registered and published in accordance with the provisions of Article 18 of the Covenant.

"In the exceptional cases provided for in the preceding paragraph, the limitations laid down in Articles 10 to 18 of the present Convention shall not be applicable.

"Notwithstanding the prohibition of passage laid down in paragraph 2 above, vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers, whether they are Black Sea Powers or not, which have become separated from their bases may return thereto.

"Vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers shall not make any capture, exercise the right of visit and search, or carry out any hostile act in the Straits."



mutual assistance of which Turkey was a signatory did not alter the situation, since Turkey had previously been at liberty to conclude such pacts and retained this liberty now. Britain had agreed with Turkey on this point, confident that she would make wise use of this [liberty], even without having obtained Britain's views beforehand. When I asked straight out what Turkey's intentions were in this respect, he replied that Turkey would not be taking the initiative with regard to such a pact; should it come from another quarter, Turkey would study the matter, paying careful attention to the relations existing among other States. Turkey would not allow herself to be involved in combinations directed against Germany. (When discussing this subject I gained the impression that efforts are in fact being made to draw Turkey into treaty relations of this kind, but that she will not lightly surrender her freedom of choice. In any case it would be [advisable] to watch these points.) When I asked whether the Balkan Pact could be interpreted as making it obligatory to permit passage in accordance with Article 19, paragraph 2, he firmly denied this. In Montreux he would have rejected, without even referring the matter to Ankara, a formula capable of being interpreted in this sense. Relations with Britain were particularly trustful. In view of the accommodating attitude Britain had adopted in Montreux, Turkey had felt obliged to give her a unilateral assurance of support in the event of an Italian attack, similar to the unilateral confidential promise which Britain had given to Turkey. Although both sides had thus secured a certain degree of freedom, nevertheless in practice there resulted an understanding about mutual consultation which benefited peace in the Mediterranean. (The Italian Ambassador,<sup>5</sup> who is informed, described it as a new invention in the construction of pacts—"unilateralism".)

An appreciation of the general situation created by the Convention follows by courier.<sup>6</sup>

KELLER

<sup>5</sup> Carlo Galli.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 483.

## No. 482

1915/430757-58

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Greece to the Foreign Ministry*

II GA 2

ATHENS, July 27, 1936.

Received August 3.

Pol. IV 2062.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Minister President Metaxas about German-Italian relations; Greek satisfaction over the fact that no political agreements with Italy exist.

During my first visit on returning from leave, I told Minister President Metaxas, in accordance with the instructions given me orally by Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff, that we had entered into no treaty commitments of a political nature *vis-à-vis* Italy. I added that in many questions our interests ran parallel with those of Italy. It was therefore natural that Italy's and Germany's attitudes on these questions should coincide. Beyond this, however, there were no general agreements. The references, which had appeared in the Greek press too, to future close political collaboration between Germany and Italy on a treaty basis were completely without foundation. In particular it was quite absurd for reputable Greek newspapers to attach to the German-Italian civil aviation agreement of June 29, which grants the Lufthansa the right to land on Rhodes, fantastic speculations about Germany wanting to revive her pre-war Berlin-Baghdad policy. Our interests in the eastern Mediterranean were purely economic. The Führer and Chancellor intended to continue his policy of peace in collaboration with Britain. This excluded the possibility of our entering into any combinations directed against Britain.

M. Metaxas received these observations with evident relief. The first question which he, in his turn, asked was whether we had similarly informed Yugoslavia, to which, basing myself on telegram No. 84 of July 16,<sup>1</sup> I was able to reply in the affirmative. M. Metaxas then informed me that Turkey was clearly drawing closer to Britain. The Turkish attitude during the Montreux Conference and afterwards left no doubt as to this *rapprochement*. I gained the definite impression that M. Metaxas was basing himself on official Turkish information, though in the main he quoted press reports. The prospect of seeing Soviet Russia appear in the Mediterranean does not exactly please the Greeks either. The Minister President mentioned in this connection that, as a consequence of the Dardanelles Treaty,<sup>2</sup> Greece had regained the right to fortify the islands of Samothrace and Lemnos. Whether Greece would avail herself of this right was still undecided. I should mention in this connection that rumours are current here that Britain has declared herself prepared to provide considerable financial aid should Greece fortify the two islands.

It emerged from the conversation that Greece is seriously disturbed by the possibility of close political collaboration between Italy and Germany in the eastern Mediterranean. I think it is a good thing for our relations with Greece that these anxieties have been removed. It is fortunate that the conversation with the Minister President took place before it became known that our Ambassador in Rome had informed the Italian Government that we intended to convert our

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 452, footnote 5.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the Montreux Convention; see Editors' Note, p. 669.

Legation in Addis Ababa into a Consulate General.<sup>3</sup> The Greek press has, as far as I can see, regarded this as recognition of the annexation but has otherwise taken it calmly.

KORDT

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<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 479.

## No. 483

1594/384325-34

### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

A 1658

TARABYA, July 28, 1936.

Received July 31.

Pol. VII 997.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: The new Straits Convention.<sup>1</sup>

Layout of the main power-lines in the situation created by the Convention.

1. Turkey as the basic factor.
2. Relations with Soviet Russia.
3. Relations with Britain.
4. The attitude of Italy.
5. A Turkish-French Pact?
6. Balkan Pact and Little Entente. Bulgaria. The final act in Ankara.

If one attempts to strike a preliminary balance in the Turkish Straits action which has now ended with the signing of the Montreux Convention, it is not so much a matter of analysing the technical side of the Convention's provisions, though they in fact display the defects of laborious compromises and of a structure reaching too far into the unforeseeable future. More important appear to me to be the resultant political repercussions with regard to the distribution of power and the tendencies towards the formation of *blocs*. Here, however, one must proceed from the fact that, whilst certain trends are already emerging now, the basic components which have been stirred up will not settle down again for a long time yet. For this latter state of affairs a Berlin newspaper recently found a good expression, when it headed its leading article with the words: "Meanwhile events march on". The present state of affairs gives rise to the following observations and diagnoses:

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 669.

### 1. *Turkey as the basic factor.*

From now on international policy must, in theory, take into account a Turkey who, strongly fortified at one of her gates of entry—and that the most coveted one—can, in view of the local conditions there, on the one hand defy any attack, and, on the other, serve as the point of departure for military actions—also in favour of possible allies. The moment from which this situation may in practice be regarded as having come into existence and as forming a factor in strategic calculations, depends on the speed with which Turkey is able to carry out the fortifications of the Straits, taking into account her financial capacity and the technical conditions. A transition period is just as much a necessity here as it was for Germany over her declaration of military sovereignty and reoccupation of the Rhineland. In consequence Turkey has no interest in allowing matters to develop too rapidly before she starts to play her part as a military power factor. She has all the less reason to permit this in that territorial war aims are not matters of vital necessity to her.

Even now, however, the increased prestige, the expectation of her future armament on the Straits and the self-confidence based on the successes (skilfully presented to the outside world) of a Turkey who has proved herself as a European Power, must be assessed as a political imponderable (but, within the limits of this term, as an imponderable of great significance). The consciousness that, in the execution of the provisions of the Convention, Turkey will in many cases have her hands on the rudder, makes it possible for her, even beyond the actual implementation [of the Convention], to look after her independence in accordance with the methods she has always pursued.

### 2. *Relations with Soviet Russia.*

This will above all make itself felt in her *relations with Soviet Russia*. If it was Turkey's hope to emerge, by the fortification of the Dardenelles, from her previous role of the weaker partner (a role forced upon her in her treaty relationship with Russia), then she has to a large extent succeeded in doing so, despite the advantages which the Soviet Union enjoys under the new Convention. If, on the other hand, it was observed in Moscow some time ago that Ankara was loosening the bonds somewhat, then the course taken by the Conference will have furnished fresh proofs of this; one of the most striking was the resistance to accepting obligations under the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact. If it is true, as is alleged (though it is not possible to verify this before the publication of the minutes), that Litvinov was the only one among the speakers at the close of the Conference who devoted no word of thanks to Tewfik Rüstü Aras, then this would constitute an acknowledgement of this fact. Nor is the



fact that Ambassador Karakhan<sup>2</sup> only sent a telegram of congratulation on Turkey's great success to the acting Foreign Minister, Saraçoglu, and did not await the return of Aras before proceeding on leave, exactly a demonstration of cordial feelings either. The fact, too, that a few days ago, in a leading article, the editor of the *Cumhuriyet* and the *République* was at pains to represent the "misunderstandings" between the two friends which had arisen during the Conference as having been happily overcome, but at the same time strongly stressed the independence and sovereignty of Turkey, leads one to infer that in this matter all is not quite well. This feeling is nourished here by the belief that the Soviet side overreached themselves in their demands on Turkish allegiance.

It would, however, be completely wrong to see in these symptoms anything more than one of the vicissitudes which, as experience shows, occur in the relations between two States closely linked by natural conditions, when their true interests occasionally diverge and when, moreover, personal feelings are involved. Quite apart from the personal attitude of Atatürk<sup>3</sup> and Ismet İnönü,<sup>4</sup> the loosening of the links with the Soviets would not only deprive Turkey of important support, but, unless there were a complete revolution in the international political situation, would mean an incalculable threat to her existence. It is for this reason that, time and again, the spotlight is turned on to the monument to Turco-Russian friendship; any blemishes on it are not apparent to the casual observer. Thus, even now, the Turco-Russian friendship must be regarded as a second factor in the picture as it will be in the near future, even though this friendship may not always function faultlessly.

### 3. *Turkey's relations with Britain.*

As a means of counterbalancing any fluctuations in Moscow's good humour, Turkey has at her disposal her *relationship with Britain*. The need for security for her Mediterranean coasts against the ineradicable fear of Italy's expansionist designs has driven Turkey (who in this respect can expect no military support from Russia, and is not even entirely sure about the latter's political relations with Italy) into Britain's arms; conversely, the British Empire has need of Turkey as a *point d'appui* and must value her the more highly when she has become invulnerable on the Straits. The imposition of sanctions against Italy furnished the formal occasion for clothing this mutual security interest in a practical form, namely, in the well-known Mediterranean Agreements.<sup>5</sup> With the abolition of sanctions they no longer

<sup>2</sup> Leon Karachan, Soviet Ambassador in Turkey.

<sup>3</sup> Kemal Atatürk, the Turkish President.

<sup>4</sup> Ismet İnönü, the Turkish Minister President.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 403, footnote 4.

fitted into the picture and those States which, like France and Greece, regarded them more as awkward temporary fetters than as a political necessity resulting, quite independently of sanctions, from their fixed political interests, lost no time in ridding themselves of them and in declaring, in one form or another, but in any case unequivocally, that they regarded the assurances previously given by way of protection against an Italian attack provoked by sanctions, as having been rendered invalid by the abolition of these sanctions. Britain was finally compelled to bow to the logical force of this reasoning, but at the same time she sought means of avoiding the practical consequences of the lapsing of the arrangements. This explains the seemingly inconsistent and contradictory way in which the question was dealt with in London and the veil which even now it is sought to draw over the two countries' real attitude: Mr. Eden began by declaring in Parliament that the Agreements with the Mediterranean States still existed,<sup>6</sup> then the British declarations on this point became more uncertain and evasive. Ambassador Grandi was told in London that with the abolition of sanctions the Mediterranean Agreements too had lost their practical importance. In Turkey, where—already mistrustful—they learned of this latter interpretation, it was thought that they were being deceived by Britain and for a time they were furious about this double game. During the final days this comedy of errors ultimately came to a "happy end".<sup>7</sup> Britain has "unilaterally" promised the Turks protection against Italian attacks, and Turkey, in order to avoid appearing as one of Britain's protégés, did not hesitate to inform the public, through the semi-official *Agence Anatolie* on July 21, that the promises given to Britain by Turkey in December 1935 remained "unilaterally" valid, as she felt strong enough to take care of her own defence. Tewfik Rüstü Aras admitted, during my conversation with him after his arrival in Istanbul, that this was indeed the situation, but at the same time he emphasized that these assurances must be classed as completely independent of one another and that they left both parties, by contrast to reciprocal obligations, sufficiently free—particularly with regard to timing. The seal appears to have been set on this solution (by means of which it is hoped to meet Italian objections to the continued existence of the Mediterranean Agreements) at a meeting—entirely accidental of course—between the President of the Republic, İsmet İnönü, and the British Ambassador<sup>8</sup> which took place a few days ago at the railway station at Haidar Pasha.

The Turkish side are making great play with the theme of gratitude to Britain, who, by her attitude over the final drafting of Article 19, made possible the achievement of the new Straits Convention and

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 449, footnote 3.

<sup>7</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>8</sup> Sir Percy Loraine.

hence Turkey's victory. The press is accordingly playing a different tune about Britain, and is stressing how strong the friendship between the two countries has grown and how greatly relations between the two States have changed by comparison with Britain's pre-war hostility towards Turkey and Britain's attitude towards her at the end of the World War. The attacks on Britain which were appearing a fortnight ago are forgotten.

#### 4. *The Attitude of Italy.*

This development, as seen from here, leads naturally on to the question of *Italy's attitude* to the overall complex of Mediterranean questions. As things stand at present, Italy cannot but regard the Mediterranean Convention as the instrument of a policy directed against her. It needs considerable credulity, therefore, to regard Aras' remark that Italy would surely soon accede to the Convention as more than a conciliatory phrase designed to dispose of a point which now appears to be of minor importance; the remark would doubtless be better translated as: "Italy will surely have no other choice!"

Whether this will in fact prove to be the case, I am not able to judge from here. From my conversations with the Italian Ambassador<sup>9</sup> I merely conclude that underlying his observations on all the questions connected with the settlement of the sanctions affair and the Conference at Montreux is a certain feeling of irritation which is attributable not only to the fact that the contradictory statements made by the Turkish Government regarding the Mediterranean assistance obligations had several times put him in the embarrassing position of having to retract his reports from one day to the next. Rather, the Italian mood of irritation is assuredly due to the fact that they regard this construction of unilateral—but parallel—assurances as a juggler's trick, and not as a re-formulation of the true state of affairs. If as a result the Italian side feels isolated, then this would to some extent explain the interest which my Italian colleague is showing in the possibility of establishing such relations between Italy and Yugoslavia as would no longer be in the nature of a conflict. If Italy is also partly impelled by the hope of thus prising Yugoslavia loose from the Little Entente (which, however, appears scarcely feasible) then one might suspect that it is along such lines of thought that the leaders of the Italian State are at present trying to advance.

#### 5. *A Turkish-French Pact?*

The question of whether *Turkey* will enter into a *relationship with France* analogous to the Franco-Russian Pact must at present be

<sup>9</sup> Carlo Galli.



described as still an open one. The statements made to me by the Foreign Minister last Saturday, which I have already reported,<sup>10</sup> that the Turkish side would take no initiative in this sense, have in the meantime been confirmed to me by another informed and reliable quarter. I was told that Turkey had no particular interest in such ties and, if such ideas were to be pursued by others, could afford to allow things to take their course; so far my confidant assured me, Turkey had not been approached with suggestions. Tewfik Rüstü Aras can, after my conversation with him, be in no doubt that Turkey would need to treat the question of such a pact with special caution, particularly with regard to Germany. In any case, for the present, if efforts are really being made in this direction, the inclusion of Britain would at the least be a cause of delay.

6. *Balkan Pact and Little Entente. Bulgaria.*

Finally, as regards the *relations of the Balkan Pact to the Little Entente*, one is constantly being assured here that membership of the former in no way binds Turkish policy to the policy of the latter. The Balkan Pact is, for all participants, and especially for Turkey, an internal Balkan matter and in no way binds Turkey in respect of her relations with States outside the Balkans. A striking example of this is, as Aras recently stated, the fact that the Turkish Government maintain excellent relations with Hungary. The increase in her capacity for political action which Turkey has through the outcome of Montreux should strengthen that independence upon which she has always laid stress, in this sector of her interests too. In this context mention should also be made of the friendly, almost coaxing tone which is at present employed here towards Bulgaria.

The formal, final act in the Straits action will be performed by the Turkish Government on July 30 at a special session of the Grand National Assembly in Ankara. On this occasion, both legal authorization for the ratification of the Acts of Montreux will be granted there, and the draft laws for the fortification of the Straits and for the voting of the necessary finances will be submitted. It may be assumed that, in addition, on this occasion either Atatürk himself, or Minister President Ismet İnönü, will make statements about the basic principles of Turkish policy, and that with these statements Turkey will assume her new elevated position amongst the European Powers.

KELLER

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<sup>10</sup> See document No. 481.



## No. 484

1872/423755-60

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 162

BERLIN, July 29, 1936—8:20 p.m.

Pol. I 1384.

We intend very shortly to reply in the affirmative to the invitation communicated to us by Britain, France and Belgium to Western Pact discussions. In this connexion the following points need to be considered:

1. We intend, in our reply, to refer only to paragraph 3 of the London communiqué of July 23,<sup>1</sup> thus not to paragraph 5 (subsequent negotiations). This paragraph 3 falls into two parts. What the three Governments propose is firstly that a new agreement should be concluded to take the place of Locarno, secondly that "the situation created by the German initiative of March 7,<sup>2</sup> 1936, should be resolved through the collaboration of all concerned". The first proposal agrees with the German Memorandum of March 7 and the German Peace Plan of March 31.<sup>3</sup> With regard to the second proposal, from the explanation given by Eden to Prince Bismarck, "all concerned" in paragraph 3 is meant to refer only to the Five Powers (see our despatch Pol. I 1321 of July 27).<sup>4</sup> We intend to seek clarification of this point once again. We shall, moreover, request information as to what is really meant by this second part of paragraph 3, and in the meantime we shall reserve our attitude to this point of the programme. Here again, I would refer to Eden's statements to Bismarck. Naturally, there is in this connexion no question of any compromise whatever over the former demilitarized zone. On this point we are counting, if need be, on Italy's support and would be grateful for an express promise. It appears, moreover, that even France is hardly insisting emphatically any more on demands of this kind and that Britain and Belgium share the German point of view.

2. We assume, after Eden's statements in the House of Commons on July 27<sup>5</sup> regarding the abolition of the Mediterranean pacts, that it is

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., by the German Memorandum of Mar. 5, with which the reoccupation of the Rhineland was communicated to the Locarno Powers. See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 242.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 477, with footnote 9 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 478, with footnotes 7 and 8 thereto.

unnecessary for us, on our side, to make any reservation concerning Italian participation. Should the Italian Government have any wishes in this respect, we should be prepared to study them.

3. In our reply we shall particularly stress that careful diplomatic preparation is necessary. This is in fact the real nub of our reply. Eden put forward the same view in the House of Commons.

4. In point 10 of the German Peace Plan of March 31, 1936, we proposed that the negotiations on the Western Pact should take place "under the leadership of the British Government". We wish to take this proposal up again, as it is desirable to have the diplomatic discussions coordinated by a single agency, and we should be glad if the Italians were to show understanding for this. It will naturally still be open to each of the participating Powers to discuss matters with the other participating Powers. We propose that there should be a continuous exchange of views between Berlin and Rome regarding such discussions.

5. In our reply we do not yet wish to enter into the actual content of a future Western Pact. It is precisely this which will be the subject of the future diplomatic negotiations.

6. We intend, for the moment, to make no definite proposals regarding a date for the discussions and we shall tell the three Powers that we would not consider it appropriate either if, already at this stage, a definite date were to be mentioned in a communiqué. The date will be dependent on the course of the diplomatic negotiations and possibly on other factors as well; at earliest, the middle of October might be considered. An additional reason to be given in oral discussions is that the question of the connexion between a future Western Pact and the League of Nations Covenant needs clarification and that it is therefore desirable to await the result of the enquiry currently in progress among the League of Nations Powers regarding the form which the League of Nations' obligations ought to take in future.

7. Our reply would be given orally in Berlin to the representatives of the three Powers and the Italian Ambassador in Berlin would be informed simultaneously. In a press communiqué it would simply be stated that the German Government had accepted with thanks the invitation to a meeting of the five Powers and had at the same time drawn attention to the necessity for thorough diplomatic preparation. The German Government had suggested, in accordance with point 10 of the Peace Plan of March 31, 1936, that these discussions should take place under the leadership of the British Government. The fact that Italy was being simultaneously informed of our reply would be mentioned in the press communiqué.

You should immediately inform the Government at your post of these our intentions, and ask them whether they have any comments to make on them or wishes to put forward. Furthermore, we would

request information as to the corresponding Italian intentions. If Italy's answer is received promptly, our reply could be given as early as Friday<sup>6</sup> or Saturday, and we attach importance to doing so.

You should report by telegram.<sup>7</sup>

NEURATH

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<sup>6</sup> i.e., July 31.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 487.

## No. 485

6110/E452440-41

### *Circular of the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, July 30, 1936.

W I Gen. 5845.

The great upsurge in the German domestic economy during the last two years has made *the supply of indispensable foreign raw materials* the most important task for German economic policy. The solution of this task is decisive not only for the maintenance and further expansion of the German economy itself, but also for related and equally important spheres such as the combating of unemployment and the supplementing of military rearmament. It has therefore become a vital question for the German people.

In view of Germany's well-known position with regard to gold, foreign exchange, and currency, the import of foreign raw materials is dependent on the volume of German goods exported. It stands in a direct and unalterable relationship to the export of goods. An increase in the export of German goods is therefore a necessary precondition for an increase in the import of foreign raw materials.

This state of affairs makes it more than ever the duty of German Missions abroad to devote themselves to their economic tasks, the most important of which is to promote German exports generally and at every single opportunity. Apart from those Missions which are directly concerned in solving the major problems pending in foreign policy, there is at present no task more important for the other Missions than this one. I therefore make it the special duty of all officials of German Missions abroad to put all their energy into working for this task. This applies not only to those officials who are specially assigned to work on economic matters, but to all officials and in particular to the Heads of Missions themselves.

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Heads of all Embassies, Legations and Consulates General.

I am prompted to issue this instruction on the one hand because the seriousness of the situation and the importance of the problem in this sphere is perhaps not yet sufficiently realized at all posts abroad, and on the other, because grievances and complaints have recently increased here, both from the official circles concerned and from private industry, that business activities are often insufficiently supported by the official Missions abroad.

Although I was able to state, in answer to these reproaches, that in many Missions such exemplary work was being done in the economic sphere that it was known and recognized in business circles, I cannot on the other hand disguise the fact that I myself am not equally satisfied with the contributions of some Missions abroad. I therefore seriously admonish and instruct all officials abroad to examine for themselves whether sufficient attention and energy has hitherto been devoted to this task, and from now on to make up for what has perhaps been neglected in the past.

I would request you:

- 1) to call together the officials at your post, to inform them of the substance of this directive, and to impress upon them most particularly the need for fulfilling our tasks in the economic sphere;
- 2) to send the subordinate offices in your area a copy of this directive by safe means, if it has not already gone to them direct as shown in the list of addressees.

Following upon these general instructions, I may deal with individual questions in special directives in the near future.<sup>2</sup>

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 511.

## No. 486

7790/E562700-05; 709-13

*The Naval Attaché in Great Britain to the Commander in Chief of the  
Navy and to the Foreign Ministry*

Mar. No. 701

LONDON, July 30, 1936.  
SK 175.

Subject: Anglo-Russian Naval Agreement.

Sir Robert Craigie had invited the Chargé d'Affaires at the German Embassy (Freiherr von Marschall) and myself to a discussion today which took place at 11.30 a.m. at the Foreign Office; apart from the three persons already named, Captain Philips, Head of the Plans Division, and Sir Robert Craigie's assistant, First Secretary Holman, also took part.



Sir Robert Craigie stated that negotiations between the British Government and the representatives of the Soviet Government for the conclusion of an Anglo-Russian Naval Agreement, had been concluded yesterday (July 29, 1936) with the drawing up of a joint protocol. He handed us the completed protocol, which is enclosed.<sup>1</sup>

The protocol was then discussed in detail.

Sir Robert Craigie described the outcome in general as satisfactory, in so far as it had been possible to negotiate with the Russians at all. Since, in the negotiations, the latter had, to some extent, been in a position to see all the cards, they had held all the trump cards on their side. The greatest difficulties had been expected from the Russians, and it had come as a surprise to find that the objections raised by them had been confined within general, moderate bounds. It had been quite obvious that the Russians, for their part, had been making efforts to reach an agreement.

On *Point I* it was stated that Russia would in no circumstances be prepared to communicate any details about her affairs in the Far East as long as Japan, for her part, remained outside the treaties. It would, moreover, be a long time before the Russians would be able to see any real effect in the Far East.

With reference to the second paragraph, it was stressed that Russia had submitted to greater limitation than other countries, which were accorded immediate freedom under the Safeguarding Clause.<sup>2</sup> The Russians had indicated that they did not intend to construct beyond the treaties, unless Japan were obviously to construct beyond the treaties; in that case, under Article XXV, all countries would in any case be freed from the Treaty.

On *Point II*: No remarks.

On *Point III*: The figure of two Capital Ships<sup>2</sup> there mentioned is that accepted by the Russians. Efforts had been made to induce the Russians to forgo the 16 inch guns. They had, however, insisted on the possibility of such construction, quite obviously with an eye on Japan. The British Admiralty had consequently stated their agreement to the above formula. The Russians possessed neither a 15 nor a 16 inch gun and would first have to construct both.

Moreover the British did not expect that the vessels would in any case be completed before the Treaty expired.

On *Point IV*: The term "London Naval Agreement" employed in the Russian formula referred to the Naval Agreement of 1936 (United States, Britain and France). The Russians had taken as the basis of their calculations the seven new and also the three old French 'A' [class]

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<sup>1</sup> See enclosure; annexed to it was a print of Articles 1-29 (7790/E562719-25) of the London Naval Agreement of Mar. 25, 1936, for which see Editors' Note, p. 304. German translations of the enclosure and annex are filmed on 7790/E562714-18; 726-48.

<sup>2</sup> in English in the original.

cruisers. The British had with the greatest difficulty succeeded in inducing the Russians to reduce the number to seven in respect of cruisers; this must be recognized as a considerable reduction to which the USSR had only agreed after much opposition. Any further reduction did not appear possible; the negotiations on this point alone had lasted from June 17 to July 29.

Sir Robert Craigie stated that it was, of course, in the proviso [marked] 1 in the statements<sup>3</sup> that the difficulty of the Treaty lay. Since, however, this [proviso] was coupled with the undertaking contained in [the passage marked] number 2<sup>3</sup> not to build more than two Capital Ships<sup>2</sup>, the difficulty seemed to the British to be somewhat lessened. They were convinced that the 8,000 ton cruisers were in any case inferior ships. It could also be assumed that some of these cruisers would be permanently stationed in the Far East. Sir Robert gave figures: at least three in the Far East, four in Europe, not all of which would be in the Baltic. On enquiry he stated that these figures had not been provided by the Russians, but were derived from British calculations.

Moreover, he said, in view of the over-all shipyard situation in Russia,<sup>4</sup> it was not to be assumed that the vessels would be particularly good ones or that they would be completed in good time before the expiry of the Treaties.

Sir Robert Craigie once again expatiated in detail on the question of the 'A' [class] cruisers; he urgently requested, as he has several times done before, that Germany should not, by reason of this Agreement, build the two cruisers still due to her, since it was quite clear that on all sides a new race to build such vessels would then begin, in which case the Russians, Point IV of the Treaty being abandoned, would immediately go up to ten vessels again and the other States would likewise embark on an immediate increase.

On the other hand it was to be expected that if a limitation as proposed were now to be generally agreed upon, the Japanese would also accede to the Treaty.

Sir Robert Craigie felt he must therefore emphasize that "the transaction" could not be a particularly advantageous one for Germany, if she did not accept the proposal now put forward.

It was further mentioned that the Russians had already actually laid down three to five (of which they had admitted to three)<sup>5</sup> vessels of this type, but that they were only mounting on them a small number of 7 inch guns, because they were constructing these vessels as experimental vessels both as regards type and guns. After two to three years of experimenting, they had now succeeded in constructing

<sup>3</sup> i.e., in the penultimate sentence of Point IV in the enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Raeder's handwriting: "Two are to be built in Britain."

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Raeder's handwriting: "Two in Britain."

machines capable of producing 18 centimetre guns; to adapt them would cause a further delay of two to three years.

On *Point V*: No remarks.

Sir Robert Craigie summed up with some observations on the Agreement and emphasized that the 'A' [class] cruiser question really constituted the last remaining obstacle in the way of bringing about a general world agreement. It was intended to negotiate in September of this year with the Danes (possibly as representatives also of the Scandinavian countries), and subsequently with the Turks, and it was expected that, when all the Italian complaints had been settled, Italy too would be prepared to take part in the Naval Agreement. The prospects for Japan too were not unfavourable, although there were difficulties owing to the attitude she had adopted previously at the London Conference, but these difficulties related more to the exchange of information than to overstepping the construction limits laid down.

In conclusion Sir Robert Craigie requested that the German views on the agreement now communicated should as far as possible be hastened, as it would be good if the whole naval negotiations could be safely home by the end of the year. He indicated that in order to make matters easier, the British would certainly be prepared to send a representative to Berlin to discuss the matter.<sup>6</sup>

WASSNER

[Enclosure]<sup>7</sup>

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE ANGLO-SOVIET NAVAL DISCUSSIONS  
HELD AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE FROM MAY 14TH TO JULY 29TH FOR THE  
PURPOSES OF CONCLUDING A BILATERAL AGREEMENT.

The Soviet Government have agreed to accept provisions similar to those of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, subject to the following points:

I. *Reservation by the Soviet Government in regard to qualitative limitation and exchange of information in respect of the Far East.*

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reserves the right not to consider itself bound by the provisions of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, regarding qualitative limitation and the exchange of information as far as its Far Eastern naval forces are concerned, so long as there shall not be concluded between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and Japan a special agreement on this subject."

In order to meet the point of view of the Soviet Government, His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are prepared to agree to the above reservation, the Soviet Representatives having made it clear

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note in Raeder's handwriting: "No."

<sup>7</sup> The original of this enclosure is in English.



that their Government have no intention of taking the initiative in constructing any ships outside the limits of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, except as specified below. If, in view of naval construction in the Far East by any other Power or Powers outside treaty limits, the Soviet Government find themselves obliged to depart from the provisions of the treaty and resume full liberty of action, they undertake to notify His Majesty's Government confidentially of such intention without, however, giving any particulars in regard to the contemplated construction. In any case they will not be required to have recourse to the procedure of consultation and three months' advance notification as set out in Article 25 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936. Once such notification has been made, the Soviet Government will be free to build in the European part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or in the Soviet Far East any type of ship which they may require for employment in the Far East, but the qualitative limits as regards ships for use in Europe will not be modified.

As regards exchange of information, it is agreed that no information should be given by the Soviet Government in respect of their naval forces in the Far East. Full particulars will, however, be furnished in regard to all vessels built in the European part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and also in regard to any vessels transferred from the Far Eastern to the European fleet. Even in the event of departure as a result of building by another Power or Powers in the Far East, particulars would continue to be furnished in respect of vessels being constructed in Europe for employment either in Europe or in the Far East. His Majesty's Government for their part would undertake to furnish the Soviet Government with complete information regarding their naval construction.

## II. *Reservation by the Soviet Government with regard to Germany.*

"The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics shall consider itself bound by the provisions of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, only to the extent to which Germany will take upon itself similar obligations."

It is agreed that provision will be made in the agreement to give effect to this reservation.

## III. *Soviet Amendment in regard to Capital Ships.*

"In so far as a considerable number of existing capital ships of the chief naval Powers carry 15 and 16-inch guns, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics reserves for itself the right to construct, prior to the 1st January, 1943, such a number of capital ships, with guns not exceeding 16 inches, as that of such ships belonging to the Power a party to the London Naval Agreement, possessing the smallest number of such ships."



In pursuance of the above, the Soviet Government reserve the right to lay down before January 1st, 1943, two capital ships carrying 15 or 16-inch guns. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom are prepared for their part to agree to the construction of these ships, but their agreement must necessarily be dependent on no objection being raised by other Powers concerned.

#### IV. *Soviet Amendment as regards "A" Class Cruisers.*

"Although the chief naval Powers, and in particular the Powers which have signed the London Naval Agreement, have a considerable number of light surface vessels carrying guns with a calibre of 8 inch, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agrees not to construct light surface vessels with guns of a calibre exceeding 7.1 inches (180 mm.). The number of such vessels constructed by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics prior to the 1st January, 1943, shall not exceed the number of light surface vessels carrying 8-inch guns of the Power a party to the London Naval Agreement possessing the smallest number of such vessels."

The Soviet Government have undertaken that these vessels will not exceed the maximum displacement permissible under the cruiser holiday, namely, 8,000 tons; but they wish to construct 10 light surface vessels mounting 7.1-inch (180 mm.) guns (in addition to the existing experimental cruiser mounting 4 7.1-inch guns). The Soviet Government have, however, agreed to reduce this number from 10 to 7 provided (1) that no further sub-category (a) cruiser is laid down by any other Powers, and (2) that the Soviet Government obtain the right to build two 15 or 16-inch gun capital ships. His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have concurred in the construction of 7 8,000 ton cruisers carrying a gun of 7.1 inch (180 mm.).

#### V. *Reservation by the Soviet Government in regard to the notification of minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels.*

"In so far as the information provided for in Article 19 of the London Naval Agreement in regard to minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels does not provide a basis to judge about the fighting power of the fleet, and is not of sufficient importance, the Soviet Government reserves for itself the right not to furnish such information and shall not demand such information from the British Government."

In view of the fact that the Soviet Government state that it would be difficult for them to furnish His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom with full particulars in regard to minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels as contemplated under Article 19 of the London Naval Treaty, 1936, on account of the State ownership of nearly all

Soviet ships, it has been agreed that during the period of any Anglo-Soviet bilateral agreement, such information need not be exchanged between the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United Kingdom. In the event of a general international treaty, the Soviet Government would be prepared, in agreement with other Governments, to consider entering into an undertaking to furnish the required particulars.

FOREIGN OFFICE,  
29th July, 1936.

## No. 487

1872/423761-63

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

ROME (Quirinal) July 31, 1936—1:45 a.m.

No. 126 of July 30

Received July 31—4:30 a.m.

Pol. I 1402.

With reference to your telegram No. 162 of July 29.<sup>1</sup>

I called on Foreign Minister Ciano today and informed him as instructed.<sup>2</sup> He had the draft of a written reply in front of him; this was fully consonant with our views in so far as it was couched in very general terms, spoke expressly of a conference of the Five Powers and emphasized the necessity for careful diplomatic preparation. The reply was somewhat less positive than our proposed views, in so far as it spoke of acceptance "in principle". After I had made my opening statements, Ciano was rung up by Mussolini, who was staying on the Adriatic coast, and who, after Ciano had evidently put him in the picture, authorized him to reply in the sense proposed by Ciano and to come to an understanding with me about it. On my informing him that we would only reply orally, he said that in that case he would do the same, and that, following our example, he would mention in the communiqué that the German Ambassador had been informed at the same time.

(1) In her reply, Italy will thus not state any views on the separate points of the London communiqué,<sup>3</sup> hence, of course, not on point 5. The exact significance of point 3 is not clear to the Italian Government either. That we should not in any way show ourselves willing to compromise on the question of the former demilitarized zone, Ciano

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 484.

<sup>2</sup> For Ciano's record of this conversation see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 45-46 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, p. 22).

<sup>3</sup> Of July 23. See Editors' Note, p. 819.

considered to be a matter of course. Although he had no instructions from the Duce regarding my question, there was no doubt that in principle Italy would treat the matter of the Rhineland zone as a *fait accompli*.

(2) Ciano thanked me for the information that we were prepared to study the matter, should the Italian Government have any wishes regarding a reservation about Italian participation. He too thought, however, that such a reservation was no longer necessary.

(3) With regard to the demand for careful diplomatic preparation, there is complete agreement.

The same applies to point 5 (no entering into the contents of a future Western Pact) and 6 (making no proposals regarding a date) and, finally, regarding further contacts with the Government in Berlin.

On the other hand my statement on point 4, about taking up again the proposal for leadership by the British Government, greatly astonished and obviously discomposed Ciano. He described this point as casting a shadow over the whole matter in which, otherwise, such complete agreement existed between Berlin and Rome. The impression made by a communiqué containing such an offer would without doubt be very unfavourable here. Nor could he see any need to make this offer, since it was now a matter of a new Five Power conference, at which, and also during the preparations for which, complete equality of rights and parallelism must prevail among the participants. I pointed out the fact that the proposal was not new, but had already been made in point 10 of the Peace Plan, which was why we must abide by it. Moreover, it was in the general interest, particularly in view of the raising of the Communist banner in Western Europe, that we should draw Britain to us as much as possible. Ciano replied that there was no need for us to go back in any way on the willingness we had expressed in March this year. But he must urgently request that the reply to the Note should not mention this proposal. He could not agree that it was appropriate to give Britain so privileged a position at the present moment. I went on to stress the practical point of view that someone must be in charge, whereupon he replied that he could not even visualize such leadership in practice nor was it ever customary. When I then pointed out that the communication would after all only be made orally, he asked me urgently to see to it that the mention, if made at all, should be quite casual and consist of a vague reference to point 10 of the Peace Plan, and that it should in no circumstances occur in the communiqué; he chiefly asked, however, as he had begun by doing, that all mention should be omitted.

Finally, Ciano stated with regard to my statement about our intention of replying as early as tomorrow or the day after, that he proposed that we should agree on a date; he too was prepared to make an early

reply and he asked me to inform him between 11 and 12 tomorrow whether a reply should be given as early as Friday or not until Saturday. I promised him that I would telephone the Foreign Minister tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock and would let him know, whereupon he again asked that, if at all possible, I should then give him a reassuring promise regarding this sole point of difference. I shall, therefore, telephone tomorrow morning at 11 o'clock.<sup>4</sup>

HASSELL

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<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum, RM 605 of July 31 (5948/E437710), on this telephone conversation, Neurath recorded that he had informed Hassell that the German reply would not go into details at all.

## No. 488

1872/423764

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 127 of July 31

ROME, July 31, 1936—2:15 p.m.

Received July 31—5:10 p.m.

Pol. I 1411.

With reference to my telegram No. 126 of July 30<sup>1</sup> and in connection with my today's telephone conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister.

Foreign Minister [Count]<sup>2</sup> Ciano rang me up this morning shortly before the above-mentioned telephone conversation. He again requested that, if at all possible, the passage regarding British leadership should be deleted from our reply and from the communiqué; he also informed me that the Italian Government thought it advisable to furnish the reply to the Locarno Powers on the lines communicated to me, doing so orally this same day at 5 o'clock, and that in the communiqué mention would be made of the German Ambassador's having been informed, just as the German side had promised to do. After my telephone conversation with the Reich Foreign Minister, I rang Ciano up again and informed him that, at the Italian desire, mention of British leadership in the preliminary discussions would be omitted both from the reply to the Locarno Powers and from the communiqué, for which he thanked me warmly. I also informed him that a number of difficulties prevented the German reply being given as early as today or tomorrow; instead, it could only be given early next week. Our attitude had, however, undergone no material alteration. In reply to Ciano's question as to

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 487 and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> This word appears in the Rome Embassy draft (see footnote 4 below).



whether, in view of the postponement of our reply, there would be any objections to the Italian reply being made today, I stated, in accordance with instructions from the Reich Foreign Minister, that there were none. Ciano remarked that this was very convenient for him because he had already asked the representatives of the Locarno Powers to come and see him.

I have not yet mentioned the conversation with Vansittart at your end.<sup>3</sup> I request instructions as to whether I may tell Ciano anything about the substance of the discussions, and also as to the date of the German reply, as soon as this has been fixed.<sup>4</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 489. No telegram to Hassell on this subject has been found.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note on the Rome Embassy's draft of the document here printed (M286/M011920-22): "Minute. 1) At 1:45 p.m. H[err] v. Kotze too rang up and informed me that it had been decided to make the reply orally at 5 p.m. today too, provided it had been ascertained that the same thing was to be done here. This I confirmed, calling attention once again to the dropping of the 'British clause' and to the reference to the Italian Ambassador in the communiqué; both of which were confirmed by H[err] v. Kotze. 2) I thereupon rang up Ciano, informed him of this decision and asked for confirmation that the Italian *démarche* was in fact to take place at 5 p.m. today. Ciano expressed his gratitude, evincing great pleasure, particularly when I repeated the statement about the British clause (*in order to be on the safe side* I said [it would] *certainly* not be in the communiqué, probably not in the oral reply either); he stated that the Ital[ian] reply would still be given at 5 p.m.; Mussolini had meanwhile also agreed to postpone it, if that should be considered desirable here in view of [the situation in] Berlin; this consideration was now of course irrelevant. To be filed. H[assell], July 31."

## No. 489

3317/E007737

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, July 31, 1936.

RM 604.

This afternoon I received the British Ambassador,<sup>1</sup> the French Ambassador and the Belgian Minister in turn, and informed them that the German Government accepted the invitation to participate in a conference of the five Locarno Powers to consider the conclusion of a new Western Pact. In doing so, I said that this Conference must first be thoroughly prepared through diplomatic channels. With regard to the date, this could only be fixed when a clearer picture had emerged from the diplomatic negotiations. The three Heads of Missions, as did likewise Sir Robert Vansittart who came, with Sir Eric Phipps, to pay me a visit, took the view that there was no prospect

<sup>1</sup> Sir Eric Phipps had just returned from leave in London, accompanied by Sir Robert and Lady Vansittart, sister of Lady Phipps, who were spending a short holiday in Berlin (see footnote 2). In a memorandum, R.M. 598, of July 30 (3618/E027228-29), Neurath recorded a conversation of even date with the British Chargé d'Affaires, in the course of which he told Newton that Germany would be accepting the Three Power invitation in principle but making some remarks on the programme; Newton had told him that Vansittart would be arriving next day.

of the conference's meeting before the middle of October.<sup>2</sup> All three Heads of Mission warmly welcomed the German Government's agreement to the holding of a conference.

I had informed the Italian Ambassador of our reply beforehand.<sup>3</sup>

VON NEURATH

<sup>2</sup> On July 29 (1437/363464) Hencke recorded a telephone message from the London Embassy that Vansittart would be leaving next day for Berlin to visit the Olympic Games, thus accepting an invitation from Ribbentrop; he requested that his visit, which was purely private, should be treated as such in the press. According to press reports, Vansittart remained in Berlin from July 31 to August 13, during which time he met nearly all the members of the Government and many other prominent persons; on August 5 he had an interview with Hitler (see *The Times*: July 31, August 6 and August 14, 1936). No full records of these conversations with Vansittart have been found in the Foreign Ministry archives but see also documents Nos. 508, 510, 532 and 541.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 129 of July 31 (3618/E027238) Hassell reported: "Ciano telephoned at 17:30 and told me that the oral reply had, as agreed, just been given and the communiqué issued. He added, in confidence, that the French Ambassador had asked why the expression "in principle" (in Italian: "in massima") had been employed. Ciano had replied that this did not affect the acceptance of the invitation but indicated that agreement must still be reached over the programme, the date and all the details. Chambrun had further enquired why the communiqué contained the last sentence about informing the German Ambassador, to which Ciano had replied that this was only natural as it was a matter concerning all the five Powers; the same would be done in Berlin." For the text of the communiqués issued by the German and Italian Governments respectively on July 31, 1936, see *Documents on International Affairs, 1936*, pp. 219-220.

## No. 490

7434/E540078-108

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

[OBERSALZBERG, August, 1936]

#### *The political situation.*

Politics are the conduct and the course of the historical struggle for life of the peoples. The aim of these struggles is the assertion of existence. Even the idealistic ideological struggles [*Weltanschauungskämpfe*] have their ultimate cause and are most deeply motivated by

<sup>1</sup> It would appear from the following covering note by Albert Speer, dated Aug. 22, 1945 (7434/E540109) that Hitler was the author of the document here printed: "*Memorandum by Adolf Hitler on the Tasks of a Four Year Plan*. This memorandum was handed to me by A.H. personally in 1944 with the following statements:

"The lack of understanding on the part of the Reich Ministry of Economics and the opposition of the German business world [*Deutsche Wirtschaft*] to all large-scale plans prompted him to elaborate this memorandum at Obersalzberg.

"He had then decided to carry out a Four Year Plan and to put Göring in charge of it. On Göring's appointment as Commissioner for the Four Year Plan he had given him this memorandum. It existed in 3 copies only of which he was giving me one.

"Göring was appointed Commissioner for the Four Year Plan on October 18, 1936 (by decree [published] in the *Reichsgesetzblatt* [1936, Pt. I, p. 887]) so that the memorandum may have been originated about August, 1936.

"My secretaries, Edith Magiera and Annemarie Kempf, made this transcript in my office, for my archives at Nuremberg. Speer."

This memorandum, together with Speer's covering note, was used at the Nurem-

nationally [*volklich*] determined purposes and aims of life. Religions and ideologies are, however, always able to impart particular harshness to struggles of this kind, and therefore also to give them great historical impressiveness. They leave their imprint on the content of centuries. In such cases it is not possible for peoples and States living within the sphere of such ideological or religious conflicts to dissociate or exclude themselves from these events. Christianity and the migration of peoples determined the historical content of centuries. Moham-medanism too convulsed the Orient, and with it the Western world, for half a millennium. The Reformation caught up the whole of Central Europe in its wake. Nor was it possible for individual States—either by skill or by deliberate non-participation—to steer clear of events. Since the outbreak of the French Revolution, the world has been moving with ever increasing speed towards a new conflict, the most extreme solution of which is called Bolshevism, whose essence and aim, however, is solely the elimination of those strata of mankind which have hitherto provided the leadership and their replacement by world-wide Jewry.

No State will be able to withdraw or even remain at a distance from this historical conflict. *Since Marxism, through its victory in Russia, has established one of the greatest empires in the world as a forward base for its future operations, this question has become a menacing one. Against a democratic world ideologically rent within itself stands a unified aggressive will founded upon an authoritarian ideology.* The means of military power available to this aggressive will are meantime increasing rapidly from year to year. One has only to compare the Red Army as it actually exists today with the assumptions of military men 10 or 15 years ago to realize the menacing extent of this development. Only consider the results of a further development over 10, 15 or 20 years and think what conditions will be like then!

### *Germany.*

Germany will, as always, have to be regarded as the focal point of the Western world in face of the Bolshevist attacks. I do not regard this as an agreeable mission but rather as a handicap and encumbrance upon our national life regrettably resulting from our position in Europe.

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#### *Footnote (1) continued.*

berg Trials before the International Military Tribunal as Defence Exhibit—Schacht 48, and in Case 11 of the subsequent proceedings as document No. N I-4955, Prosecution Exhibit 931. The Schacht Exhibit was not reprinted in *Trial of the Major War Criminals*; for the translation used in Case XI see *Trials of War Criminals before the Nuremberg Military Tribunals under Control Council Law No. 10* (U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, Oct. 1946–Apr. 1949), Vol. XII, pp. 430–439.



We cannot, however, escape this destiny.

Our political situation results from the following:

Europe has at present only two States which can be regarded as standing firm in the face of Bolshevism: Germany and Italy. The other countries are either disintegrated through their democratic form of life, infected by Marxism, and thus likely themselves to collapse in the foreseeable future, or ruled by authoritarian Governments whose sole strength lies in their military means of power; this means, however, that, being obliged to secure the existence of their leadership in face of their own peoples by means of the armed hand of the Executive, they are unable to direct this armed hand outwards for the preservation of their States. All these countries would be incapable of ever conducting a war against Soviet Russia with any prospects of success. In any case, apart from Germany and Italy, only Japan can be regarded as a Power standing firm in the face of the world peril.

It is not the aim of this memorandum to prophesy the time when the untenable situation in Europe will become an open crisis. I only want, in these lines, to set down my conviction that this crisis cannot and will not fail to arrive and that it is Germany's duty to secure her own existence by every means in the face of this catastrophe, and to protect herself against it, and that from this compulsion there arises a series of conclusions relating to the most important tasks that our people have ever been set. *For a victory of Bolshevism over Germany would not lead to a Versailles Treaty but to the final destruction, indeed to the annihilation of the German people.*

The extent of such a catastrophe cannot be foreseen. How, indeed, would the whole of densely populated Western Europe (including Germany), after a collapse into Bolshevism [*nach einem bolschewistischen Zusammenbruch*], live through probably the most gruesome catastrophe for the peoples which has been visited upon mankind since the downfall of the States of antiquity. *In face of the necessity of defence against this danger, all other considerations must recede into the background as being completely irrelevant.*

### *Germany's defensive capacity.*

Germany's defensive capacity is based upon several factors. I would give pride of place to the intrinsic value of the German people *per se*. A German people with an impeccable political leadership, a firm ideology and a thorough military organization certainly constitutes the most valuable factor of resistance which the world of today can possess. Political leadership is ensured by the National Socialist Party; ideological solidarity has, since the victory of National Socialism, been introduced to a degree that had never previously been attained. It



must be constantly deepened and hardened on the basis of this concept. This is the aim of the National Socialist education of our people.

Military development [*Auswertung*] is to be effected through the new Army. *The extent and pace of the military development of our resources cannot be made too large or too rapid!* It is a capital error to think that there can be any argument on these points or any comparison with other vital necessities. However much the general pattern of life of a people ought to be a balanced one, it is nonetheless imperative that at particular times certain disturbances of the balance, to the detriment of other, less vital, tasks, must be adopted. *If we do not succeed in developing the German Wehrmacht within the shortest possible time into the first Army in the world, in training, in the raising of units, in armaments, and, above all, in spiritual education as well, Germany will be lost!* The principle applies here that the omissions of peace-time months cannot be made good in centuries.

All other desires must therefore be unconditionally subordinated to this task. For this task is life and the preservation of life, and all other desires—however understandable they may be in other periods—are, by comparison, of no account or are even mortally dangerous and therefore to be rejected. Nor will posterity ever ask us by what methods or by what concepts, views, etc., which are valid today, we achieved the salvation of the nations, but only *whether* we achieved it. Nor would it one day be an excuse for our downfall were we to point to the measures, be they never so well tried, which had nevertheless unfortunately caused that downfall.

#### *Germany's economic position.*

Just as the political movement among our people knows only one goal—to make good the claim to life of our people and Reich, that is to say to secure all the spiritual and other prerequisites for the self-assertion of our people—so too the economy has but this one purpose. The people do not live for the economy or for economic leaders or economic or financial theories; on the contrary, finance and economy, economic leaders and theories must all exclusively serve this struggle for self-assertion in which our people are engaged.

Germany's economic position is, however, in the briefest outline, as follows:

1) We are overpopulated and cannot feed ourselves from our own resources.

2) When our nation has 6 or 7 million unemployed, the food situation improves because these people are deficient in purchasing power. It naturally makes a difference whether 6 million people have 40 Marks a month to spend or 100 Marks. It should not be overlooked that a third

of all who earn their living is involved, that is to say that, taken as a proportion of the total population, through the National Socialist economic policy about 20 million people have been afforded an increase in their former standard of living of, on an average, from at most 50 Marks a month to at least 100-120 Marks. This means an increased and understandable run on the foodstuffs market.

3) But if this rise in employment fails to take place, then a higher percentage of the people must gradually be deducted from the body of our nation, as having become valueless through undernourishment. It is, therefore, in spite of our difficult food situation, the highest commandment of our economic policy to see to it that, by incorporating all Germans into the economic process, the precondition for normal consumption is created.

4) In so far as this consumption applies to articles of general use, it is possible to satisfy it to a *large* extent by increasing production. In so far as this consumption falls upon the foodstuffs market, it is not possible to satisfy it from the domestic German economy. For, although numerous branches of production can be increased without more ado, the yield of our agricultural production can undergo no further substantial increase. It is equally impossible for us at present to manufacture artificially certain raw materials which we lack in Germany, or to find other substitutes for them.

5) It is, however, wholly pointless to keep on noting these facts, i.e., stating that we lack foodstuffs or raw materials; what is decisive is to take those measures which can bring about a *final* solution for the *future* and a *temporary* easing for the *transitional period*.

6) The final solution lies in extending the living space of our people and/or the sources of its raw materials and foodstuffs. It is the task of the political leadership one day to solve this problem.

7) The temporary easing can only be brought about within the framework of our present economy. In this connexion, the following is to be noted:

a) Since the German people will be increasingly dependent on imports for their food and must likewise, whatever happens, import a proportion at least of certain raw materials from abroad, all means must be employed to make these imports possible.

b) An increase in our own exports is theoretically possible, but in practice hardly likely. Germany does not export to a political or economic vacuum but to areas for which competition is unprecedentedly severe. Our exports, compared with the general international economic decline, have sunk not only *not more* but in fact *less* than those of other peoples and States. But since imports of food have, on the whole, hardly dropped at all, but if anything are rising, an adjustment must be found in some other way.

c) It is, however, impossible to use foreign exchange allocated for raw materials to import foodstuffs without inflicting a heavy and perhaps even fatal blow on the rest of the German economy. *But above all it is utterly impossible to do this at the expense of national rearmament.* I must at this point most sharply reject the view that, by restricting national rearmament, i.e., the manufacture of arms and ammunition, we could bring about an "enrichment" in raw materials which might then benefit Germany in the event of war. Such a view is based on a complete misconception—not to use a harsher expression—of the tasks and military requirements with which we are faced. For even a successful saving of raw materials by reducing, for instance, the production of munitions would merely mean that we should stockpile these raw materials in time of peace so as to manufacture them only in the event of war; that is to say, we should be depriving ourselves, during the most critical months, of munitions, in exchange for raw copper, lead or possibly iron. But in such a case it would nonetheless be better for the nation to enter the war without one kilogram of stocks of copper but with full munition depots, rather than with empty depots but so-called "enriched" stocks of raw materials.

War makes possible the mobilization of even the last supplies of metal. For it then becomes not an *economic problem* but solely a *question of will*. And the National Socialist State leadership would possess the will, and also the resolution and the toughness, to solve these problems in the event of war. But it is much more important to prepare for war in time of peace! In addition, however, the following must be stated:

There can be no building up of a reserve of *raw materials* for the event of war, just as there can be no building up of foreign exchange reserves. The attempt is sometimes made today so to represent matters as though Germany went to war in 1914 with well-prepared stocks of raw materials. This is a lie. It is not possible for any State to assemble beforehand the quantities of raw materials necessary for war if the war lasts longer than, say, a year. If any nation were really in a position to assemble the quantities of raw materials needed for a year, then its political, economic and military leaders would deserve to be hanged. For they would in fact be setting aside the available copper and iron in preparation for the conduct of a war, instead of manufacturing shells for that war. But Germany went into the World War without any reserves. What was available at that time in Germany in the way of apparent peace-time reserves was abundantly counterbalanced and rendered valueless by the miserable war-stocks of ammunition. *Moreover, the quantities of raw materials that are needed for a war are so large that there has NEVER in the history of the world been a real stockpiling for a*



*duration of any length!* And as regards preparations in the form of piling up foreign exchange, it is quite clear that:

1) War is capable of devaluing foreign exchange at any time, unless it is held in gold, and

2) There is not the least guarantee that gold itself can be converted in time of war into raw materials. During the World War Germany still possessed very large assets in foreign exchange in a great many countries. It was not, however, possible for our cunning economic policy-makers to bring to Germany, in exchange for them, fuel, rubber, copper or tin in any sufficient quantity. To assert the contrary is ridiculous nonsense. For this reason and for the reason that we must safeguard the feeding of our people, therefore, the following task presents itself as imperative:

*It is not sufficient merely to draw up, from time to time, raw material or foreign exchange balances, or to talk about the preparation of a war economy in time of peace; on the contrary, it is essential to ensure peace-time food supplies and above all those means for the conduct of a war which it is possible to make sure of by human energy and activity. And I therefore draw up the following programme for a final solution of our vital needs:*

I. Like the military and political rearmament and mobilization of our people, there must also be an economic one, and this must be effected in the same tempo, with the same determination, and, if need be, with the same ruthlessness as well.

In future the interests of individual gentlemen can no longer be allowed to play any part in these matters. There is only one interest and that is the interest of the nation, and only one single view, which is that Germany must be brought politically and economically into a state of self-sufficiency.

II. For this purpose, in every sphere where it is possible to satisfy our needs through German production, foreign exchange must be saved in order that it can be applied to those requirements which can under no circumstances be supplied *except* by imports.

III. Accordingly, German fuel production must now be stepped up with the utmost speed and be brought to final completion within 18 months. This task must be attacked and carried out with the same determination as the waging of a war; for on its solution depends the conduct of the future war and not on the laying in of stocks of petroleum.

IV. It is equally urgent that the mass production of synthetic rubber should be organized and secured. The contention that the processes are perhaps not yet fully determined and similar excuses must cease from now on. It is not a matter of discussing whether we want to wait any longer, for that would be losing time, and the hour of peril would take us all unaware. Above all it is not the task of State economic institutions



to rack their brains over production methods. This has nothing to do with the Ministry of Economics. Either we possess today a private industry, in which case it is its task to rack its brains over production methods, or we believe that the determination of production methods is the task of the State, in which case we no longer need private industry.

V. The question of the cost of these raw materials is also quite irrelevant, since it is in any case better for us to produce in Germany dearer tyres which we can use, than for us to sell [*sic—verkaufen*] theoretically cheap tyres for which, however, the Ministry of Economics can allocate no foreign exchange and which, consequently, cannot be produced for lack of raw materials and consequently cannot be used at all. If we are in any case compelled to build up a large-scale domestic economy on the lines of autarky—which we are—for lamenting and harping on our foreign exchange plight will in any case not solve the problem—then the price of raw materials individually considered no longer plays a decisive part.

It is further necessary to increase the German production of iron to the utmost. The objection that we are not in a position to produce from the German iron ore, with a 26 per cent content, as cheap a pig-iron as from the 45 per cent Swedish ores, etc., is irrelevant because we are not in fact faced with the question of what we would *rather* do but only of what we *can* do. The objection, moreover, that in that event all the German blast furnaces would have to be converted is equally irrelevant; and, what is more, this is no concern of the Ministry of Economics. It is for the Ministry of Economics simply to set the national economic tasks, and it is for private industry to carry them out. But should private industry believe that it is not able to do this, then the National Socialist State will succeed in carrying out this task on its own. In any case, for a thousand years Germany had no foreign iron ores. Even before the war, more German iron ores were being processed than during the period of our worst decline. *Nevertheless, if we still have the possibility of importing cheap ores, well and good. But the future of the national economy and, above all, of the conduct of war, must not be dependent on this.*

It is further necessary to prohibit forthwith the distillation of alcohol from potatoes. Fuel must be obtained from the ground and not from potatoes. Instead, it is our duty to use any arable land that may become available, either for human or animal foodstuffs or for the cultivation of fibrous products.

It is further necessary for us to make our supplies of *industrial* fats independent of imports as rapidly as possible and to meet them from our coal. This task has been solved chemically and is actually crying out to be done. The German economy will either grasp the new economic tasks or else it will prove itself quite incompetent to sur-

vive in this modern age when a Soviet State is setting up a gigantic plan. *But in that case it will not be Germany who will go under, but, at most, a few industrialists.*

It is further necessary to increase Germany's output of other ores, *regardless of cost*, and in particular to increase the production of light metals to the utmost in order thereby to produce a substitute for certain other metals.

It is, finally, necessary for rearmament too to make use even now whenever possible of those materials which must and will replace high-grade metals in time of war. *It is better to consider and solve these problems in time of peace than to wait for the next war, and only then, in the midst of a multitude of tasks, to try to undertake these economic researches and methodical testings too.*

In short: I consider it necessary that now, with iron determination, 100 per cent self-sufficiency should be attained in all those spheres where it is feasible, and not only should the national requirements in these most important raw materials be made independent of other countries but that we should also thus save the foreign exchange which in peacetime we require for our imports of foodstuffs. *Here I would emphasize that in these tasks I see the only true economic mobilization and not in the throttling of armament industries in peacetime in order to save and stockpile raw materials for war.*

But I further consider it necessary to make an immediate investigation into the outstanding debts in foreign exchange owed to German business abroad. There is no doubt that the outstanding claims of German business are today quite enormous. Nor is there any doubt that behind this in some cases there lies concealed the contemptible desire to possess, whatever happens, certain reserves abroad which are thus withheld from the grasp of the domestic economy. I regard this as deliberate sabotage of our national self-assertion and of the defence of the Reich, and for this reason I consider it necessary for the Reichstag to pass the following two laws:

- 1) A law providing the death penalty for economic sabotage, and
- 2) A law making the whole of Jewry liable for all damage inflicted by individual specimens of this community of criminals upon the German economy, and thus upon the German people.

Moreover, only the performance of these tasks in the form of a Several Years Plan for rendering our national economy independent of foreign countries will make it possible for the first time to demand sacrifices from the German people in the economic sphere and the sphere of foodstuffs, for in that case the people will have a right to demand of their leaders, whom they blindly acknowledge, that they tackle the problems in this sphere too with unprecedented and resolute action and

do not merely discuss them, that they solve them and do not merely record them!

Nearly four precious years have now gone by. There is no doubt that by now we could have been completely independent of foreign countries in the sphere of fuel supplies, rubber supplies, and partly also iron ore supplies. Just as we are now producing 700,000 or 800,000 tons of petroleum, we could be producing 3 million tons. Just as we are today manufacturing a few thousand tons of rubber, we could already be producing 70,000 or 80,000 tons per annum. Just as we have stepped up the production of iron ore from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  million tons to 7 million tons, so we could be processing 20 or 25 million tons of German iron ore, and if necessary even 30 million. There has been time enough in four years to discover what we cannot do. It is now necessary to state what we can do.

I thus set the following task:

I. The German army must be operational [*einsatzfähig*] within four years.

II. The German economy must be fit for war [*kriegsfähig*] within four years.

## No. 491

9093/E639647-51

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Poland, the Consulates General in Danzig, Katowice, Poznań and Toruń, and the Consulates in Cracow and Lwów.*

BERLIN, August 3, 1936.

W I V O E 1283.

Subject: Conclusion of the Treaty about I.G. Kattowitz/Laura.

On July 27, 1936, there was signed in Warsaw the Treaty about the liquidation of the German share in the so-called I.G. Kattowitz/Laura,<sup>1</sup> that is to say the Kattowitz Company for mining and metallurgy and the Krolewska i Laura Company.<sup>2</sup> The basis of the Treaty is the German-Polish preliminary agreement [*Punktation*] of April 7 last<sup>3</sup> about the settlement of the outstanding and current German Corridor [payments] obligations, in which, apart from agreement about the treatment of these questions, there were also foreshadowed conversations "about the value of German capital shares in and claims on the I.G. Kattowitz and methods for offsetting". These conversations took

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 264, footnote 6.

<sup>2</sup> The text of this Treaty has been filmed as 9093/E639619-45.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 264, enclosure.



place in May and June between representatives of the German group, that is to say of the major German shareholders and major German creditors, and the Polish Mining and Metallurgy Co. Ltd., Warsaw. From these conversations emerged the protocol signed in Berlin on June 11 last, which, after approval by both Governments, has, with some minor alterations, now become the text of the Treaty.

The Treaty provides for the German group to transfer their shareholding, amounting to a nominal value of about 66 million Złoty in the Kattowitz Company and 84 million Złoty in the Krolewska i Laura, to the Polish parties to the Treaty, and further cedes the claims of the big German banks against both companies to the Polish group. In return the German group will receive bonds amounting to 80 million Złoty in the amalgamated and reformed I.G. Kattowitz/Laura. These bonds are divided into two series of approximately equal size both secured by first mortgages on the works. Series A is to be redeemed after two redemption-free years in instalments spread over fifteen years, and Series B is then likewise to be redeemed in fifteen annual stages. Interest and amortization charges are to be met through additional supplies of goods, on whose nature, quantity, etc., a separate agreement is to be reached. The payments arising from Series A are given a guarantee by the Polish State; for the payments arising out of Series B the German group are receiving an option on payment in deliveries of coal, with each bonds of a nominal value of 100,000 Złoty being equivalent to 6,395 tons of hard coal. This option, besides affording security against a possible depreciation of the Złoty, offers a possibility of improving the German claims, as these deliveries according to current prices could be disposed of on the German market at about 150 per cent. of the nominal value of the bonds. Whether there will be any further possibility of realizing these bonds in advance—possibly by offsetting them against German liabilities or obligations arising from the Corridor traffic—cannot at the moment be foreseen.

This Treaty is intended to put an end to a development which in recent years has increasingly diminished the value of German holdings in the above-mentioned concerns. The considerable sacrifice made on our side in this agreement is only understandable on the grounds of this development, which in outline is as follows: Marketing difficulties which have arisen in consequence of the world economic crisis have compelled a considerable reduction in production, but, for political reasons, this could not be offset by a corresponding decrease in labour-force. Dismissal of German personnel had to be avoided as far as possible; at the same time the Polish authorities refused to supply the necessary permits for the dismissal of Polish employees and workers as required under the Polish demobilization regulations. These developments, and above all the measures of Polonization simultaneously



introduced by the Polish authorities, caused the position of the I[nteressen]-G[emeinschaft] to deteriorate to such a degree that in 1934 it had to be placed under administrators, so that the management of the works was transferred to the (Polish) administrators appointed by the Polish courts. In view of this situation it was only to be expected that the Polish officials would rather force the I[nteressen]-G[emeinschaft] into bankruptcy than allow its management to revert to German hands. If only in view of the German foreign exchange position, it did not appear feasible for the German authorities to provide [financial] support for the concern. In view of this situation the Reich Ministries concerned and the representatives of the German group had for some time been agreed in thinking that it had become necessary to dispose of the German holdings. Since postponement of the matter would only have led to a further reduction in the value of the German holdings, the opportunity afforded by the preliminary agreement of April 7 for discussing questions of German-Polish capital movements was utilized to settle this question too.

A discussion of this Treaty in the German press did not appear desirable. Therefore there was only issued the communiqué enclosed herewith and measures have been taken to ensure that the German press shall not publish any details or express any views on the contents of the agreement. It is, however, not impossible, although the German representatives agreed upon the communiqué with the Polish side, that the Polish press will comment on the agreement. I would therefore request that you report on the reaction in the press at your end.

By order:  
SCHNURRE

[Enclosure]

#### ANNOUNCEMENT FOR THE PRESS

After negotiations of some length, which were conducted, with the approval of the German Reich Government, between representatives of the shareholders and creditors on the one hand and the representatives of the Polish Government on the other, the future proportions of holdings in the I.G. Kattowitz/Laura have been finally clarified.

The holding company commissioned by the Polish Government will take over all the shares held by the German Group against payment in the form of bonds, of which the greater part is guaranteed by the Polish State. At the same time the German Group have agreed to a settlement of liabilities of the syndicate, which will enable a radical reform of the companies to take place and thus enable the administrators imposed upon it to be removed.

## No. 492

1933/433534-35

*Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV*

BERLIN, August 4, 1936.

e.o. Pol. IV 2131.

Drafting Officers: { Senior Counsellor Heinburg.  
Counsellor Busse.

The Rumanian politician Octavian Goga (who is also his country's best-known lyric poet) is one of the leaders of the Rumanian Right-wing parties which have formed a group under the former National Tsaranist [Peasant] Minister President, Vaida Voevod,<sup>1</sup> and who for some years have been reckoning on their forming the government. With regard to their prospects in this respect, see the memorandum dated July 18 of this year<sup>2</sup> about Nae Ionescu.

It is asserted in Rumania that the Rumanian Right-wing parties have received financial support from Germany, namely from certain authorities of the NSDAP. Minister Fabricius has also been approached by King Carol about this matter.<sup>3</sup> The King told him most gravely that he would in no circumstances tolerate interference of this kind in Rumanian internal affairs. He, the King, already possessed definite proofs of the transfer of money, which he was alleging. Since the Party and Reich were one, he must make the Reich Government responsible for contacts of this nature.

In order to clarify this situation Minister Fabricius spent a few days in Berlin at the end of July. However, owing to the absence of the expert on Rumanian affairs in the Aussenpolitisches Amt of the NSDAP, no definite information could be obtained. The matter is being pursued by Pol. IV.

If monies are in fact being transferred to Rumania for the purposes of

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Vaida Voevod, a former Minister President and leader of the National Peasant Party, had left this Party and had formed a group called the Rumanian Front at the end of 1935.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1936/440722-23); a memorandum by Woermann dealing with information received from Fabricius that Professor Nae Ionescu was on his way to Berlin where he desired to have interviews with leading persons, especially with Hitler. In despatch No. 1675 I A of July 15 (7418/E539406-07; 1936/440712-14) Fabricius had reported a conversation with the intimate associate of Vaida Voevod, V. Tilea, who had told him in confidence that Nae Ionescu was being sent to Berlin as their confidant by the Rumanian Right-wing parties, where, allegedly on behalf of King Carol, he was to submit certain proposals to Hitler; Fabricius also enclosed a memorandum by Pochhammer on a conversation with Tilea, who had proposed a declaration by Hitler concerning Rumania's existing frontiers. In a memorandum of Aug. 4 (1936/440724-25) Busse recorded that Nae Ionescu had called at the Foreign Ministry but had made no request for an interview with the Foreign Minister or the Reich Chancellor.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 397.

the Right-wing parties there, this would probably be in the form of fees paid to ostensible reporters of the German Party newspapers, or in the form of providing printing presses free of charge or something of the kind. On this subject also Minister Fabricius has supplied further information (see the attached memorandum of July 7, 1936).<sup>4</sup>

Herewith submitted to the Office of the R[eich] [Foreign] M[inister] with reference to M. Goga's forthcoming reception by the Reich Minister.<sup>5</sup>

HEINBURG

<sup>4</sup> A copy (1933/433536-39) of document No. 440.

<sup>5</sup> This reception would appear to have taken place on Aug. 6; see also document No. 497.

### No. 493

3494/E019785

#### *The Ambassador in Turkey to the Foreign Ministry*

Cipher Letter

A 1677

TARABYA, August 4, 1936.

Pol. VII 1097.

As the Hungarian Minister de Máriássy informs me confidentially, he was instructed to let the Turkish Government know that were Turkey to conclude with another State a Pact containing obligations for Turkey regarding the Hungarian frontier or directed against Hungary in some other way, Hungary would consider this to be an unfriendly act. Tewfik Rüstü [Aras] denied that the Turkish Government had any intentions in this direction; he declared, as he had previously to me,<sup>1</sup> that they would not take any initiative for new pact negotiations, but he added that if such an initiative were taken by a Great Power, Turkey would be obliged as a matter of courtesy and loyalty to give the suggestion benevolent consideration. Tewfik Rüstü tried to be reassuring, but in consequence of the non-binding character of his statement, he did not succeed in being entirely convincing.

In one of the conversations with the Minister, Tewfik Rüstü let it be understood, obviously with the thought that I be informed, that if Germany, going beyond the framework and objective of the impending Locarno negotiations, were to conclude separate agreements with Italy regarding their mutual political relations without making a similar offer to Turkey, the latter would definitely steer a course towards the Franco-Russian side.

KELLER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 481.

## No. 494

3618/E027241-45

*The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

A 323

BRUSSELS, August 4, 1936.

Received August 8.

Pol. I 1519.

Subject: Belgian foreign policy.

I have the honour to enclose a memorandum by Counsellor of Legation Bräuer regarding a conversation with the Belgian Foreign Minister, Spaak.

M. Spaak's statements contain interesting indications regarding the Belgian wishes in connexion with the impending Five-Power Conference. They confirm the Belgian Government's inclination, which has been perceptible from various indications in recent weeks, to limit their commitments under a new security pact as far as possible. Of particular interest too appears to me to be the Belgian Foreign Minister's remark that Belgium would be prepared to give up the talks between the French and Belgian General Staffs as soon as she had obtained guarantees for her security under a new pact.

RICHTHOFEN

[Enclosure]

BRUSSELS, August 3, 1936.

zu A 323.

## MEMORANDUM

Following a discussion to which Foreign Minister Spaak had invited me today in connexion with the erection of a memorial to civilian prisoners at Dinant, the conversation turned to the question of the renewal of the Locarno Pact and to Belgian foreign policy. From the conversation, which threw interesting sidelights on the Belgian attitude, the following points in particular should be noted:

M. Spaak said it must be known in Germany, that during the past few months Britain and Belgium had been very definitely intent on smoothing the way for a Five-Power Conference and for the renewal of the Locarno Pact. In the last few weeks before the London Conference,<sup>1</sup> France had been almost surprisingly accommodating towards these desiderata, and in London there had been far-reaching harmony

<sup>1</sup> Of July 23; see Editors' Note, p. 819.



of views, with the result of which we were all aware. Belgium sincerely hoped and desired that Five-Power discussions would come about as soon as possible and would lead to the conclusion of a new security and guarantee pact which would replace the Locarno structure. Belgium was, now as previously, out to continue her policy, started years ago, of maintaining a position of equilibrium towards all her neighbours, and to bring it to its goal. His—the Minister's—aim in his conduct of Belgian foreign policy was to avoid everything which could be interpreted as an inclination towards one or another of Belgium's neighbours. When, on his making this remark, I referred to the permanent arrangement for Belgian-French General Staff talks which had been expressly maintained in the Notes exchanged on March 6, 1936,<sup>2</sup> between the Belgian and French Governments and which surely did not quite accord with the Minister's programme, M. Spaak said that these General Staff talks could, in his view, quite well be dispensed with, as soon as Belgium had once again obtained a guarantee for her security under a new guarantee pact. The majority of the Government were, he knew, entirely in favour of the discontinuance of the General Staff talks on the above-mentioned condition. In the country, too, the recognition of the need for an independent Belgian foreign policy had progressed so far that here too there would probably be a majority in favour of giving up the General Staff talks with France after the conclusion of a new guarantee pact. This abandonment would be facilitated by the fact, *inter alia*, that Belgian foreign policy, besides building up Belgian independence, would also be directed as far as possible towards keeping her international commitments within bounds commensurate with the geographical position and the size of the country. This was, in any case, the line which the Belgian Foreign Ministry had for some time been following. He—the Minister—was fully in agreement with this line, especially as it undoubtedly accorded with Belgian public opinion. In practice this reorientation meant that Belgium would propose—perhaps already at the diplomatic discussions on the preparations for the Five-Power Conference—that her independence should be guaranteed in a new security pact by the participating Great Powers, without Belgium herself undertaking to guarantee the frontiers of one or other of the signatories of the new pact, as had continued to be the case in the Locarno Pact. He imagined that Germany would be quite agreeable to this. In Germany there was at times the fear that the Belgian defence system might form the left flank of the Maginot Line, or that Belgium might constitute a glacis for France and might one day become a deployment zone for the French Army. If, in a future guarantee pact, Belgium need undertake no obligation other than that

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 143 and footnote 3 thereto.

of defending her own sovereign territory with all the forces at her disposal against any attack, and if, from this, in conjunction with the non-aggression and guarantee obligations of the participating Great Powers, there were to arise a sort of Belgian neutrality, then the reason for the German fear lest Belgium should form part of the French defence system or lest she should become a deployment area for France, would cease to exist; Belgium would then adapt her defence system to this new international statute and the need for talks between the Belgian and French General Staffs would, in consequence, automatically disappear. In this connexion M. Spaak made statements of some length from which it emerged, amongst other things, that, in a new security pact, Belgium wished to extricate herself from her previous position of guarantor of the German and French frontiers, above all because she did not wish to become involved in the conflicts which might arise from the French alliance commitments or from the Franco-Russian Pact, which, as M. Spaak observed, was viewed in Belgium with anxiety and aversion. It would also appear to be of especial interest that M. Spaak said that a further aim of Belgium's reorientation in foreign affairs was to approximate Belgium's international position to that of Holland and thus to find a basis upon which Belgium and Holland could pursue a joint course in foreign policy.

BRÄUER

## No. 495

218/147939-47

*Counsellor of Legation Fischer to Minister Erdmannsdorff*

PEITAIHO, August 4, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON ERDMANNSDORFF: Your communication of July 9<sup>1</sup> by courier was most valuable to me and I am very grateful for it. After I had had an opportunity of once again discussing matters exhaustively with General von Reichenau in Nanking before we both left (he for Kuling, I for Peitaiho), Kriebel and I had a talk here about the whole complex of questions created by the Klein transaction. The result was the detailed report by telegram of July 30.<sup>2</sup>

I should like to add the following comments to it today:

As seen from here, two aspects of the Klein transaction stand out, one being the encroachment which must be feared on the legitimate German trade of the China firms whilst the other concerns the political repercussions.

There is nothing much that is new to be said about the first point.

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., Peking telegram No. 13 of July 30 (218/147935-36); which was on the lines of the document here printed.

The tactics of keeping the contents and scope of the entire transaction completely secret may perhaps conjure up visions of dangers which in reality do not exist at all. But the fact is that it is impossible to convince someone of the baselessness of existing fears when one has no idea of what the overall course may be. Only one point seems to be clear at the moment, namely, that the firms will cease to be middlemen in the armaments transactions with the Central Government. This is painful for the people affected but, from a general point of view, it undoubtedly has advantages; the fact that our firms were concerned with these transactions has always been open to objection, nor, of course, do the firms themselves have any claim to be brought into the affair if our armaments industry, which is controlled by the War Ministry, wishes to go its own way with regard to the sale of its products here.

This is not to say that ways and means must not be found of compensating the firms to some extent for their exclusion from the arms transactions, which is likely to endanger the existence of many of them. It is therefore not only necessary, but also justified by practical considerations, that they should be given a share in other German deliveries under the treaty. To pass over in this respect the firms in the branches of business concerned would neither do justice to their painstaking preparatory work—one recalls, for instance, the work done on the power station installations transaction—nor be of practical advantage either. The supply of high-grade machinery of one kind or another is by no means the end of the story; this was done earlier and it was left to the Chinese to do what they could with the expensive installations, with what result can be seen from the distressing example, among others, of the blast furnace works near Peking, supplied by the Japanese; not a wheel has turned there since they were set up. But we want the Chinese to use the machines all the same and to profit from them for their economic development. For this purpose, as experience has shown, continued regular contact and expert assistance are indispensable. Does Hapro intend to set up with inexperienced personnel the entire apparatus required for this, whilst there is available a well-tried organization in the form of the German firms with their branches covering the whole country?

It has been said recently<sup>3</sup> that the firm of Melchers & Co. is to play the part of agent general. This is more than it can honestly undertake to do, quite apart from the fact that it is always rather distasteful to favour one applicant above another in official transac-

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<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum, W.VII OA 679 of July 31 (218/147957), Erdmannsdorff noted the receipt by Voss from Prince Reuss (Klein's representative in Berlin) of copies of telegrams from General von Reichenau and Klein dated July 19, 21, 23, 24 and 25 (218/147958-64) concerning the implementation of the Treaty.



tions, without any apparent objective reasons. The private business man Hans Klein was able to do this; but what have Melchers & Co. and possibly also the shipping firm represented by them (the Norddeutscher Lloyd) done to deserve being singled out in the China trade by official German quarters?

Whereas, in respect of the German performance under the agreement, we are in a position to take into consideration these interests of private enterprise, which are in need of protection, by including our own firms in the transactions, it is possible that in the export transactions the difficulty will arise that the Chinese will want to do the same for their private trade. If it were only a matter of supplementary transactions, we should eventually have to reconcile ourselves to this—how the consignee would fare is another matter, but that is ultimately his own affair. It is, however, believed in German export circles that in practice it proves simply impossible to draw a clear line between supplementary and non-supplementary; and one also wonders how, with exports to a value of 40–50 millions, a German credit balance in respect of a further 100 millions' worth of supplies from China is to be covered at all. This is the point that is causing our firms most anxiety. Every avenue will have to be explored in order to prevent, in every possible way, the German export business from being pushed aside in favour of the Chinese one.

Herr Klein says that he will find a "really wonderful" solution for this too; of what nature it is to be he has unfortunately not yet disclosed to us.

You will see from the three enclosures,<sup>4</sup> which I attach, what the commercial expert has so far been able to discover about the Klein transaction. The gentlemen have not said more either to me or to Herr Kriebel about the business side of their negotiations here. I will, however, add that at the present stage of the negotiations they do not perhaps themselves know yet exactly what form the Chinese counter-performance will take in detail and how it is to be effected.

So much for the business side. I will also mention, but for the sake of completeness only, that the foreign business world, probably without exception, is watching the new ways of German economic policy in China with undisguised mistrust, believes freedom of trade to be threatened by us, and fears lest the foundations of the solid China trade should be endangered by an excessive readiness to grant credit. To this one could reply, *inter alia*, that the British for their part have had no misgivings about changing the situation as regards competition

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<sup>4</sup> Not printed (218/147948–54). These enclosures were memoranda by the Embassy's commercial expert, S. R. von Winterfeldt, of conversations he had had with (i) Gen. von Reichenau on July 2, (ii) Klein on July 3, and (iii) Widmann of the firm of Melchers on July 19.



to their advantage with the aid of their Boxer fund, after they themselves had seen to it that the Boxer compensation was lost to us. On the other hand it must certainly be admitted that our economic interests in China frequently run parallel with British and also with American interests, and that it cannot be to our interest to let an animosity arise which would isolate us economically in China. For this the Chinese partner would at least have to be more reliable and stronger.

This leads us to the question of the political repercussions!

When the Reich War Ministry states, according to the quotation on page 6 of your communication, that we as a Great Power are not accountable to any country about our deliveries abroad, this is language which *we*, thank God, are once again in a position to use. But what is the situation with China? When it became known through the press that the Japanese had enquired in Berlin about the Agreement, the Chinese, according to General von Reichenau, were prepared for similar enquiries. You are probably aware that the General—at a hint from the Chinese?—then suggested in Berlin that we should make the two replies tally as far as possible. In the end the question did not apply, as the Japanese, according to what has so far become known here, have for the time being confined themselves to enquiries and representations in Berlin. Perhaps they will leave it at that or are waiting to exert pressure on the Chinese at a more appropriate moment, as is indeed hinted at by Domei in the attached report.<sup>5</sup>

Whatever the case may be, we shall not be able to avoid considering the possibility of a Japanese reaction towards China and its consequences, and in this respect I am very seriously worried.

According to the view current here, the Agreement aims at the military rearmament and strengthening of China with German—and exclusively German—help. Whether armaments are really to form the preponderant part of our deliveries we do not know; at all events, this is what is believed here, and the appearance of a German general on the active list with a sword of honour for Chiang Kai-shek and so on is providing the necessary basis for the rumours now in circulation.

It is an indisputable fact that the Japanese are perturbed by this. True, they are hardly likely to feel themselves threatened militarily; hitherto, indeed, they have rated the fighting value of the Chinese troops at nil. But it is disrupting their policy; they already think that they can detect bolder language on the part of the Chinese and they fear that the Chinese attitude may stiffen. All in all, they will watch with suspicion every step in the military sphere taken in the execution of the Agreement.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (218/147955-56); Domei News Agency report, No. 167, date lined Peking, July 22, 1936.

General von Reichenau is fully aware of these circumstances. In my opinion, however, he overestimates the Chinese when he says that one need only traverse a short danger zone in order to make China a significant military factor, also where Japan is concerned. This period of time would admittedly have to be thoroughly utilized, and to this end the Germans too would have to cooperate much more intensively in advising and assisting. This would best be done by officers on the active list, upon whose posting in accordance with a regular roster one could agree with Chiang Kai-shek.

General von Reichenau was too cautious to allow any animus against General von Falkenhausen to emerge from his remarks, which I repeat with the request that they be treated as strictly confidential. That the Commission is actually excluding him completely and is not even informing him of what is contained in the new rearmament programme is an open secret here and might sooner or later lead to General von Falkenhausen making it a question of confidence with Field Marshal von Blomberg.

I told Herr von Reichenau that the course indicated by him must of necessity lead to obligations which, in contrast to our policy hitherto, would commit us much too strongly to the weakest factor in Far Eastern politics. In the long run we, too, could naturally only welcome a united and strengthened China. His thesis about the danger zone was not, however, correct, since the structure of the Chinese State was not nearly firm enough for China, merely by perfecting the training of her troops and equipping them with modern weapons, to be turned into a significant adversary for Japan. The process of her national ascent demanded a thorough transformation in many other spheres apart from the military one, would be protracted, and would, not least, depend on the insight and energy of the Chinese themselves. Whether the Japanese would allow this process to take place undisturbed nobody could predict; but it would be simply asking for trouble to increase the unrest by setting too impetuous a pace. *Quieta non movere!* The Japanese had become accustomed to the existence of the Advisory Staff in its present form, a fact which did not exclude the unobtrusive addition of officers on the active list as well, in order to preclude out-dating and superannuation. A radical transformation from top to bottom, on the other hand, seemed to me a two-edged sword; possible military wishes in this matter ought to be subordinated to political necessities.

General von Reichenau agreed with me in principle that any intensification of our activity in the military sphere in China would increase the risk of a Japanese reaction and that, apart from our good relations, especially between the German and Japanese armies, and the weight we carry in Tokyo, we possess no possibility of helping the Chinese

in the event of their being threatened by Japanese intervention. The consequences of a Japanese action upon our position in China and upon the Agreement could scarcely be foreseen.

I have arranged with General von Reichenau for us to meet about the middle of August in Nanking and have another talk in the light of the impressions he has gained in Kuling. If it can be done, I intend on this occasion to hand Finance Minister Kung the Red Cross decoration which has been conferred upon him. There is, of course, no point in putting this off, since he probably knows about it already. I myself feel that the decoration looks rather like a laurel-wreath as advance payment and unnecessarily attracts public attention to the mysterious Hapro agreement.

(closing formula in handwriting).<sup>6</sup>

M. FISCHER

<sup>6</sup> Thus in the original.

## No. 496

7790/E562707

*Admiral Densch to Captain (Navy) Wassner*

SECRET

August 4, 1936.

DEAR WASSNER: The Commander in Chief requests you to use your influence as far as possible to ensure that no one from your end comes to Berlin for personal consultations (e.g., Craigie).

After all, these questions are all connected with the Dardanelles question—the releasing of the Russian Black Sea fleet as a result of the Dardanelles fortifications—they belong to the realm of high politics and require careful deliberation and, accordingly, ample time.

Goodbye then, until August 10.<sup>1</sup>

Yours etc.,

DENSCH

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Densch's handwriting: "With reference to the letter of July 31." In this letter (7790/E562706) Wassner recommended that, should it be decided to take up the British offer to send someone to Berlin (cf. last sentence of document No. 486), Sir Robert Craigie should be invited, and given the opportunity to attend part of the Olympic Games.

## No. 497

7358/E584788

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 6, 1936.

RM 621.

Sond. Ref. S. 913.

The Rumanian Minister, who called on me this morning and was at



first accompanied by the [Rumanian] party leader Goga,<sup>1</sup> brought up the question, after Goga had left, of the Rumanian Government's desire that the European Danube Commission should be dissolved. In reply I told M. Comnen that I was delighted to see M. Titulescu, the sworn enemy of revision of the Peace Treaties, now joining the ranks of the revisionists and I asked him so to inform M. Titulescu. As to his question, the idea of amalgamating the International Danube Commission with the European Danube Commission was compatible with Germany's wishes with regard to revision. I must, however, refuse to take the initiative in this matter. Our interests lay primarily in securing equality of rights for Germany along the whole length of the Danube.

M. Comnen rejoined that he would so inform his Government, but nevertheless requested that when discussing the subject of the European Danube Commission in the press we should state our friendly attitude towards Rumania's wishes. I promised that, in so far as the question might be discussed here, we would exert influence on the press in this sense.<sup>2</sup>

VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 492; no records of Goga's conversations in Berlin have been found.

<sup>2</sup> Further documents on proposals for the reorganization of the Danube Commissions have been filmed on Serial 7358.

## No. 498

1933/433543-44

### *Minute by an Official of Political Division IV*

BERLIN, August 6, 1936.

e.o. Pol. IV 2283.

#### (1) Minute

Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat of the Reich Ministry of Economics rang me up on August 5 and asked whether it was the case that Minister Fabricius, from Bucharest, had been here recently. I confirmed this and informed Herr Wohlthat of the reason for Herr Fabricius' visit. (Monetary payments from Germany to the Rumanian Right-wing parties.)<sup>1</sup> Herr Wohlthat, whose name had also been mentioned in this connexion, then said that he had some information to give me on this matter. I accordingly went to see him today (August 6) at the Reich Ministry of Economics.

Herr Wohlthat told me that he had first heard of money payments

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 492.



from Germany to Rumania for political purposes in May 1935 when he was in Bucharest for economic negotiations.<sup>2</sup> At that time the leaders of the Transylvanian Saxons, e.g., Dr. Hans-Otto Roth amongst others, had told him that monies had been paid out to the "Revival Movement [*Erneuerungsbewegung*]" of the Germans in Transylvania by the Aussenpolitisches Amt of the NSDAP, the Reichsnährstand and the Reich Youth Leadership. Herr Wohlthat had not been able to trace in the files of his Ministry any document stating whether, perhaps by means of the inter-State exchange of goods and payments, funds were in fact passing to Rumania for political purposes. Ministerialdirektor Wohlthat did not know whether any monies had in fact been paid to the Rumanian Right-wing parties. He was, however, fully convinced that such payments, if they really were being made, would of necessity greatly impair and interfere with German foreign policy, particularly as the King had, as I had mentioned, already raised these matters with Minister Fabricius.<sup>3</sup>

(2) To Senior Counsellor Heinburg for his information.<sup>4</sup>

(3) To be filed.

BUSSE

<sup>2</sup> See vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 6, with footnote 2 thereto, and 110.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 397.

<sup>4</sup> No further records of discussions in Berlin on this subject have been found; see however, document No. 576.

## No. 499

605/247710-16

### *The Ambassador in France to the Foreign Ministry*

A 3344

PARIS, August 6, 1936.

Received August 8.

Pol. II 1301.

Subject: The situation with regard to French foreign policy two months after the Blum Government's entry into office.

#### *I. Characterized by uncertainty.*

The feeling of the uncertainty of the international situation with which France is faced two months after the Blum Government's assumption of office,<sup>1</sup> has become so marked that it weighs on the country like a heavy load.

#### *II. The Minister President's original desire to reanimate French foreign*

<sup>1</sup> On June 5, 1936; see document No. 315, footnote 3.

*policy and to learn from past errors and from the mistakes of his predecessors.*

The legacy which the Minister President inherited at the beginning of June from the transitional Sarraut-Flandin Government, which at the end was only a caretaker Government laboriously trying to keep pace with events, was in itself highly unsatisfactory. The conviction was becoming increasingly general that France, as a result of the German action of March 7 against which she was conducting a vain and essentially futile struggle, had suffered a humiliation and was on the way to losing her international prestige even amongst her friends and vassals.

There is no doubt that on coming to power M. Blum was determined to do his utmost to counter this. His foreign policy doctrine consisted of fundamental views which he had thought out and had advocated for years: the strengthening of the League of Nations, collective security, limitation and reduction of armaments, predominance of the democratic principle, also in foreign policy. These are largely the same guiding principles which France has in fact followed since the end of the war and with which she has suffered shipwreck. M. Blum had by no means failed to realize this. He was ready to learn from his own errors and from the mistakes of his predecessors in the Government and to adapt the practical application of his doctrine of foreign policy to the needs of the actual situation.

As for the weaknesses of the foreign policy thesis which, as leader of the Opposition, he had previously advocated, it should be recalled that, according to his ideology and despite certain changes undergone since the revolution [*Umbruch*] in Germany, international disarmament represented the keystone in foreign policy. From the outset he was inclined to place disarmament in the forefront, because he saw in its achievement the most substantial guarantee for the maintenance of peace. His closely reasoned speech at Geneva<sup>2</sup> clearly showed the change which he, as responsible Head of the Government, had made in his attitude. In it he made the, for him difficult, admission that he no longer regarded the limitation of armaments, but in its stead collective security, as the primary consideration, and further that those who desired collective security must be prepared, as long as international disarmament was not put into effect, in given circumstances to take upon themselves even the risk of war. Associated with this is the new French proposal for the reform of the League of Nations,<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> To the League of Nations Assembly on July 1, 1936; for the text see League of Nations: *Official Journal, Records of the Sixteenth Ordinary Sessions of the Assembly, Plenary Meetings, Special Supplement No. 151*, pp. 27-30.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 409, footnote 5.

which similarly starts out not from the limitation of armaments but from the realization of collective security by the conclusion of so-called regional pacts, i.e., of pacts of assistance between States which are either neighbours or which have the same interests.

These two theses mean at the same time that the new Government, too, claim the right for France to continue to draw the Eastern [European] allies into her sphere of interest and to guide them as regards foreign policy. Alongside this, there also emerged from the responsible Minister President's first statements<sup>4</sup>, in general but nonetheless clear and definite terms, the thesis of a closer foreign policy link between the democracies. It is difficult to say how great was, and still is, the importance attached by M. Blum to this [thesis] as a weapon. In fact the precipitancy with which international affairs have developed appears to have called forth a reaction, at least against overstating this thesis, which is particularly recognizable in Foreign Minister Delbos. In any case, in the latest Government statements, reference to a closer association between the democracies is subordinated to the emphasis placed on France's not desiring any formation of blocs or mounting of crusades based on ideological doctrines, because in them is inherent the particularly dangerous element of "religious wars".<sup>5</sup>

M. Blum regarded the errors of his predecessors in office as lying primarily in their methods. In Laval's foreign policy he condemned in principle the absence of any definite guiding lines of policy and the inclination to achieve momentary advantages by petty bargaining; in the Sarraut-Flandin Government's policy, the constant issuing of grandiose declarations, in which, although compelled to give way step by step, they did not cease from making unattainable demands before each fresh stage in their retreat. It was in accordance with both the character and the astuteness of the Minister President that he should avoid these mistakes.

### III. *The foreign policy programme at the time of the Government's assumption of office.*

If, in view of the above, we try to envisage the fundamental principles on which the Blum Government, at the time of their assumption of office, wished to base their foreign policy, we may perhaps sum them up as follows: Raising France's diminished prestige abroad by clearly stressing the community of interests with her friends, particularly with Britain, and with her allies, including Poland; marked, but carefully considered, cultivation of the friendship with Soviet Russia whilst

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 414 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> The reference is to a speech made by Delbos at Sarlat, on Aug. 2, 1936.



avoiding exaggeration; the winning back of Italy, and, serving the same purpose, more active pursuit of the reform of the League of Nations by favouring regional pacts; cautious attempts to establish contact with Germany.

IV. *Subsequent disappointments, which have hampered the execution of this [programme].*

If this can be described as the foreign policy programme which M. Blum had set himself on taking over the Government, then it must be admitted that during the past two months he has suffered a series of disappointments and failures which have hampered its execution.

With regard to Italy, the French concessions (granted after overcoming serious opposition at home), in particular the unconditional assent to the abolition of sanctions<sup>6</sup> and the dissolution, voluntarily offered, of the Mediterranean Pact of Mutual Assistance<sup>7</sup> which had been concluded in October, have obviously not achieved the desired result. Italy has not only not offered any *quid pro quo*, but instead, in the French view, she is working in ever closer cooperation with Germany.

The re-establishment of relations of alliance with Poland, which was so optimistically stressed in the Government declaration, has not been realized either. On the contrary, it is clear that the lukewarm attitude, in the French view, of the Polish Government over the Danzig conflict was calculated to keep the existing distrust alive despite the critical comment by the Opposition which was noted with satisfaction here. A certain bitterness on account of the improvement in relations between Germany and Lithuania is now making itself felt, even against this small State.

The efforts to restore and increase France's prestige among her allies in Central Europe and the Balkans have been grievously frustrated by the conclusion of the German-Austrian Agreement.<sup>8</sup> With mistrust and obvious envy, public opinion here has been forced to acknowledge that, without any aid from France, Germany has brought about a peaceful settlement here which, without giving the French Government any pretext for overt opposition, is calculated to strengthen German influence not only in Austria but in Central Europe as well. The position of Czechoslovakia, in particular, is regarded with increasing uneasiness. France fears that this country might be led by force of circumstances into agreements with Germany which would be bound to reduce French influence still further.

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 639.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 446 with footnotes 5 and 6 thereto.

<sup>8</sup> Of July 11, 1936; see Editors' Note, p. 755



Above all, however, the precipitate developments in Spain<sup>9</sup> have confronted the Blum Government with extremely difficult problems which are scarcely capable of a solution satisfactory to them. The first reaction which the civil war inevitably called forth was the feeling of solidarity between the French and the Spanish Popular Front Governments. The Minister President personally and many of the Socialist Ministers his colleagues at first gave spontaneous and somewhat ill-considered expression to this feeling, whilst at the same time they placed exaggerated faith in the optimistic announcements of the Spanish Popular Front Government. The conviction that the French Government should make every effort to help their oppressed political comrades at once spread to wide circles of the French Popular Front; the Socialist and Communist supporters of the Government still fully subscribe to this conviction. In the meantime, however, the Cabinet, starting with members of its Right wing and spurred on by the fact that it has come to a bitter and fluctuating struggle between the opposing sides in Spain, has come to realize how profound a significance the events in Spain might have for France. There has been stirred up a hornet's nest of international questions which directly concern France. The country beyond the Pyrenees, which had previously been a factor of secondary importance internationally, is in the process of becoming the chief feature on France's political horizon, without anyone here being quite clear as to whether it is destined to become an asset or a liability in the French balance sheet. Fear that the latter could be the case is increasing. There is no doubt in Government circles that a victory for the Nationalists would be unfavourable for France; even among the Opposition misgivings are beginning to be voiced, particularly regarding the future fate of Spanish Morocco and with it the security, so necessary for France, of the military communications between North Africa and the mother country. But a victory for the Reds would also be fraught with danger for France. Amongst discerning Government circles, anxiety is growing lest the present Spanish Government might, in the event of a defeat of the Nationalists, be succeeded by an Anarcho-Communist régime. This might then, for one thing, entail a certain danger of its spreading to France, but, above all, it might give rise in other European countries, and especially in Britain, to the impression that the French Popular Front Government, by their support of the Spanish Left wing, were partly responsible for the advent of Communism or of Anarchy in Spain.

V. *Favourable results achieved since the assumption of office.*

The above-mentioned disappointments which the developments of

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<sup>9</sup> The Spanish Civil War broke out on July 18, 1936; see vol. III of Series D, *passim*.

the past two months have brought to M. Blum are offset by comparatively few items on the credit side. The main item to be noted is probably the improvement in relations with Britain and the growth of personal trust which has arisen from the most recent discussions between the leading British and French statesmen. Here too, however, if one may judge from the experiences of many post-war years, not all the rosy dreams will come true. Quite apart from the German problem, it appears to me that the Spanish problem might give rise to differences of opinion between Britain and France.

#### VI. *Deleterious repercussions of the domestic situation.*

Finally, in assessing France's international position, the repercussions of her domestic situation must not be overlooked. The least that can be said about this last is that it does not appear to be stable. The Popular Front Government's general measures carried out with unmistakable energy, but often in a precipitate and ill-considered manner, in all spheres of finance, industry and domestic policy, have tangled the threads into such a knot that to unravel it, if this is at all possible, will require the exertion of all their strength. Although the Minister President and Foreign Minister Delbos—of whom the latter has begun to display more independence than was generally expected of him, especially in the Spanish question—are endeavouring to maintain freedom of action in foreign policy despite the internal unrest, it is nonetheless inevitable that their power of action should be impaired by the march of events inside the country. It is significant that the Minister President's original desire to reanimate French foreign policy has not, so far, led to any initiative of profound or far-reaching effect.

#### VII. *The development of Blum's attitude towards Germany.*

France's whole international position, as set forth above, exerts its influence on the Blum Government's policy towards Germany, which now as previously forms the crucial problem in French foreign policy. As mentioned earlier, M. Blum was, from the start of his term of office, determined to sit down at the conference table with Germany. I should not like to say what consideration it was that weighed most with him: that of putting Germany in the wrong in the eyes of the world, in the expectation that the conversation would prove fruitless; or, in view of a future fraught with trouble, that of not laying himself open to the subsequent charge of having for his part rejected every attempt to bring about an understanding; or finally, the consideration of perhaps really being able to arrive at a *modus vivendi* with Germany. Today, at any rate, it appears to me that, under the pressure of the general situation, which has become more unfavourable for France, the third alternative is the most likely. I see confirmation of this assumption

in the fact that, despite increasing agitation by Government supporters on the far Left, those official and semi-official Government statements and declarations which are addressed to Germany are evidence of an undiminished desire not to break down the bridges.

H. WELCZEK

No. 500

6466/E483079-82

*The Ambassador in Brazil to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL  
No. 1046

RIO DE JANEIRO, August 6, 1936.  
W VIIIb S.A. 795.

Subject: German-Brazilian trade relations.

As mentioned in my report No. Pers. Botsch/36 of July 29, 1936,<sup>1</sup> the President of the Republic, Senhor Getulio Vargas, and the Foreign Minister, Macedo Soares, on the occasion of my presenting my [new] credentials,<sup>2</sup> also commented, in the course of conversation, on trade relations with Germany. These comments may perhaps<sup>3</sup> be of interest to you. When I told the President of my satisfaction<sup>3</sup> over the agreement with us<sup>4</sup> and expressed the hope that it might operate satisfactorily for both countries, especially as we were getting Government orders from Brazil, the President replied in the same strain but added that Germany should only sell "good and useful" commodities to Brazil. As I believed this to be a hint to the effect that we might perhaps not be considered for the large artillery order for which Bofors and Krupps are at present competing,<sup>5</sup> I supplemented the President's words with "and, let us hope, indispensable goods also". The President understood and said with a smile: "We shall see".

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., on becoming Ambassador; Schmidt-Elskop had previously been Minister in Brazil.

<sup>3</sup> Against the word "perhaps", which has been underlined, there appears a question mark and opposite it in the margin in Ritter's handwriting: "Assuredly!?" The words "my satisfaction" in the next sentence have also been underlined, and a question mark placed against them.

<sup>4</sup> This agreement consisted of exchanges of Notes in Berlin on June 6, 1936 (6492/E486123-36) and in Rio de Janeiro on June 8 (6492/E486146-49); the former regulated for one year exports of various Brazilian primary products to Germany and German manufactures to Brazil, and made provision for the unfreezing of certain frozen credits; the second confirmed that the two countries would temporarily accord each other most-favoured nation treatment after the expiry of the Commercial Treaty on July 31, 1936. The text of the German Note of June 8 was published in the *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger* of July 15, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> In Report No. 906/2 of July 11 (6467/E484146-49) the Chargé d'Affaires in Rio de Janeiro gave an account of the situation regarding Brazilian governmental arms orders; other documents on this subject have been filmed on Serials 237, 6467 and 6782.



I found the Foreign Minister's attitude to trade with Germany to be one of real enthusiasm, which was in striking contrast to his former views. He said that the two countries were destined for mutual trade and then immediately went on to speak of the artillery deliveries. Krupp guns were undoubtedly the best available and the clearing system facilitated a method of payment convenient for Brazil. He would support Krupps in every way and was sure that he would succeed. But he added later (in the presence of Herr von Buelow, Krupps' representative) that there were still certain obstacles of a psychological nature to be overcome with the War Minister, João Gomes, and his very influential son, a major, although the great majority of the army were for Krupps. He advised negotiations in the first instance with the son. When I cautiously sounded the Foreign Minister during his return visit as to whether the Aranha-Beutner<sup>6</sup> group might perhaps usefully exert some influence in this matter, he replied in the affirmative. Senhor Aranha was, admittedly, a man whose chief aim was to earn money, but it could not be denied that he had influence with the President as well as with the Minister of Finance<sup>7</sup> (who, of course, had something to say in the matter of paying for the guns), but not so much with the War Minister. I have informed Herr von Buelow in confidence of the substance of these conversations, and as a result he has been in touch with the Aranha group.

The "psychological obstacles" on the part of the War Minister which the Foreign Minister mentioned are these: Senhor João Gomes is an old soldier, correct and (unlike his son) a man of integrity, who believes that he is already morally committed to Bofors since the latter have incurred such heavy expenditure on trials, etc. In particular, however, as I have heard from a reliable source, what has caused him to be unfavourably disposed towards Krupps is the fact that both factories informed him through their representatives here that it had been agreed that Bofors would supply one-third and Krupps two-thirds. This kind of communication, which would more or less mean that the European factories and not the Brazilian Government were deciding what guns Brazil should purchase, is so unacceptable to the sensitive Brazilian mind that one cannot be surprised at the consequence, which was that the War Minister at once signed a telegram to the effect that the whole order should go to Bofors. He proceeded from the assumption that Krupps had been exerting pressure in respect of the division. In my opinion it would indeed have been expedient if the

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<sup>6</sup> A. E. de Souza Aranha, a Brazilian businessman active in the promotion of commercial transactions between Germany and Brazil. Documents on negotiations with Aranha have been filmed on Serials K 906 and K 913. Dr. Wilhelm Beutner was a German lawyer who acted for Aranha.

<sup>7</sup> A. de Souza Costa.



gentlemen from Krupps had followed the advice I gave them in Berlin, and had enquired by telegram of our Embassy whether it was still possible to secure the whole order for Krupps. Minister Dittler<sup>8</sup> has told me that this would greatly have clarified the situation here and might have led to a turn of events more favourable for Krupps. The War Minister has meanwhile been enlightened about his mistake regarding the pressure which had allegedly been exerted but he still feels himself under a moral obligation to Bofors, especially under the influence of his son, who is heavily committed to Bofors.

Herr von Buelow is operating cautiously and adroitly in accordance with the Foreign Minister's repeated advice to us to proceed "with much intelligence and tact". Besides co-operating with Bromberg & Co., the permanent Krupp representatives, Herr von Buelow is, on my advice, working with Herr Lehr, the Zeiss representative, who has excellent connexions in all military circles, and with the Aranha-Beutner group. He has so far succeeded in getting the Purchasing Commission for War Material to invite him to submit a tender, and in making contact with the War Minister and his son.

I would very strongly advise against possibly compelling Herr von Buelow to demand payment in foreign exchange. This would deprive us of our main argument in favour of Krupps, namely, payment through the clearing. Only if a decision were already taken in favour of Krupps could such proposals be put forward for discussion.<sup>9</sup>

In conclusion I should also like to mention Senhor Macedo Soares' general advice to press for export to Brazil, wherever possible, such articles as cannot be supplied by the United States or Britain, so as not to bring Brazil into conflict with these countries. I would mention in this connexion that German traders have of late been complaining about over-long delays in deliveries by the German factories, which are making many sales impossible.<sup>10</sup>

Finally, I have called on Senhor Sampaio<sup>11</sup> who has recently again disclosed his pro-German feelings. He informed me that one of the (meagre) conclusions from his European tour was that Trieste should be made the centre of Brazil's coffee exports for the countries south of the Danube and Hamburg for the countries north of the Danube. He asked me whether, on this condition, we would agree, in principle, to the last-mentioned countries paying fifty per cent in German clearing

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<sup>8</sup> Counsellor of Embassy Dr. Wolfgang Dittler, who had meanwhile been appointed Minister in Colombia, had been Chargé d'Affaires in Rio de Janeiro during Schmidt-Elskop's absence on leave.

<sup>9</sup> Further material on this and other armaments transactions with Brazil has been filmed on Serials 237, 326, 6467 and 6782.

<sup>10</sup> Marginal note in Ritter's handwriting: "Give details".

<sup>11</sup> Dr. Sebastião Sampaio, Head of the Commercial Treaties Division of the Brazilian Foreign Ministry.

Marks and to our discharging this with them. I should be grateful for your instructions on this point.<sup>12</sup>

SCHMIDT-ELSKOP

<sup>12</sup> Marginal note against this paragraph in Ritter's handwriting: "Nonsense!". A marginal note on the first page of the present document reads: "H[err] Fricke, please discuss with me and submit the preceding report [see footnote 1 above] and Benzler's letter to Schmidt-Elskop during the latter's leave. R[itter], Aug. 19." Benzler's letter of June 24 is not printed (6466/E483029-31). Replying to the document here printed, in despatch zu W VIIIb SA 795 of Aug. 22 (6466/E483086-90), Ritter did not refer to the last paragraph, but informed the Embassy that the German-Brazilian Agreement (see footnote 4 above) contained discriminations against Germany which had only been accepted in view of Germany's difficult raw materials situation and in the interests of her trade with Brazil; the Brazilian Government must not get the impression that Germany was satisfied with the Agreement and the Embassy should bring Germany's objection to the discrimination to the attention of the Brazilian Government.

## No. 501

1915/430761-63

*Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff to Counsellor of Legation Kordt*

Cipher Letter

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, August 7, 1936.

Sent August 8.

zu Pol. IV 2057.<sup>1</sup>

2062.<sup>2</sup>

DEAR KORDT: I should like to write a few lines to you personally with reference to your report of July 27<sup>2</sup> on your conversation with the Minister President. As we have learned from a reliable source, the statements which you made to the Minister President have become known to foreign circles in Greece, namely to those affected. When your remarks were being quoted, it seems that particular stress was laid upon our understanding with Italy not being concerned with political matters but only with the spheres of economics and aviation, and on our having no intention of undertaking anything directed against Britain in the Balkans. This would correspond with the statements which, according to your report, you made to the Minister President.

If you compare this with our telegram No. 84 of July 16,<sup>3</sup> which forwarded to you, for your information, the instructions sent to the Legation in Belgrade on the occasion of the German-Austrian Agreement, you will realize that our concern was to describe the speculations in the foreign press regarding the formation of a German-Italian-Austrian-Hungarian *bloc*, with or without Poland, as being unfounded.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1915/430755); this was the draft of a telegram to Athens informing the Chargé d'Affaires that the Italian Government were believed to be in possession of the information indicated in the document here printed and instructing him to make cautious enquiries; this draft was marked "*Cessat*" and replaced by the present document after the receipt of document No. 482.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 482.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 452, and footnote 5 thereto.

In order to emphasize how misleading were the rumours about the formation of a bloc, it was pointed out in the instructions to the Legation at Belgrade that an option in favour of Italy, that is to say a unilateral political commitment, had neither taken place nor was it contemplated; for a commitment of this kind *vis-à-vis* Italy would, of course, be the precondition for the formation of such a bloc. Our relations with Britain were not mentioned in this despatch.

As you refer in your report<sup>2</sup> to oral instructions, I should like to make it clear that our conversation was concerned merely with a discussion of the general political situation and did not constitute instructions on statements to be made to the Greek Minister President.

I should like to assume that your statements to the Minister President will have no further consequences. Nevertheless, in view of the reports which have reached us I feel I must point out to you how great is the caution required in discussions of a political nature, particularly in the *milieu* which exists at your post. In any case it will be desirable for you, in your conversations, to maintain reserve with regard to the questions you discussed with the Minister President, even should you be approached by the other side about your statements, so as not to provide fresh sustenance for the sensation-seekers at your end.

With warmest greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

DIECKHOFF

## No. 502

218/147973

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 7, 1936.

RM 627.

The Japanese Ambassador returned to the subject of the Klein treaties today.<sup>1</sup> I again emphasized to him that it was purely a treaty relating to the exchange [of goods] and that the goods to be supplied by us were not listed in detail. Our only concern had been to import from China certain raw materials which we require for our rearmament. To this end Herr Klein, who prided himself on his good relations with the Chinese Government, had been brought into the matter. The Ambassador then repeatedly urged that we should make a statement in Tokyo to the effect that this was not a matter of a treaty concluded between the German Government and the Chinese Government for the supply of war material. I told him in reply that there was

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<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 386, 461, with footnote 1 thereto, and 495.

absolutely no reason to make such a statement. Besides, I had already told him that German goods of all kinds had been envisaged as a *quid pro quo* for the deliveries of raw materials to be effected by the Chinese. We had no occasion at all to combat, by means of a *démenti*, the wild rumours circulating in China and Japan about the extent and nature of this Klein treaty.

The Ambassador then requested that we should at least, through our Chargé d'Affaires there, make it known in Tokyo that these rumours were unfounded. I told him that, as far as I knew, this had already been done in the course of conversation. I would, however, enquire about it again.

FREIHERR V. NEURATH

### No. 503

2422/511341-44

#### *Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, August 8, 1936.

Pol. IX 796.

The American Ambassador, Mr. Dodd, returned to Berlin yesterday from a long leave and will probably call on the Foreign Minister in the next few days. I submit for this purpose a memorandum by Senior Counsellor Leitner. As far as section II of the memorandum (sabotage proceedings) is concerned, Mr. Dodd will probably not bring up this question of his own accord; this item has only been included in the memorandum to prepare for all eventualities.<sup>1</sup>

DIECKHOFF

[Enclosure]

#### MEMORANDUM

FOR THE EXPECTED VISIT TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE AMERICAN  
AMBASSADOR WHO HAS RETURNED FROM HOME LEAVE

#### I.

While Mr. Dodd was on home leave, the Americans adopted two measures which will have an extraordinarily drastic effect on German-American trade. Firstly, under a Treasury order of the beginning of June,<sup>2</sup> countervailing duties on ten of the most important German

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Has been submitted to the Foreign Minister. Foreign Minister's Office: please retain for Dodd's next visit. Ko[tze], [Aug.] 10." No record of such a conversation between Neurath and Dodd has been found.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 469, footnote 6.



export commodities were imposed, allegedly because this was mandatory under the law of 1930<sup>3</sup> (whether or not this was necessary is a moot point). This measure has annoyed us all the more, in that it was taken without previously notifying us, let alone discussing it with us.

Last week we were surprised for the second time by a further American measure, namely the demand that for every consignment of goods a detailed questionnaire should be completed as to the type and amount of the export promotion [assistance] granted in each case.<sup>4</sup> Here, too, it is a moot point whether or not the measure was necessary. The fact remains, however, that it had already been decided upon at the beginning of June<sup>5</sup> and that neither we, nor the German Delegation<sup>6</sup> which was sent to Washington as early as June and which negotiated for many weeks with the competent American authorities about the first measure, were given the slightest indication of the impending announcement.

Mr. Dodd could be told in very sharp terms that such action was not consistent with the procedure customary between States, especially when a commercial treaty existed between them.<sup>7</sup> In both instances we had been entitled to expect an official notification beforehand. The procedure adopted compelled us to conclude that our efforts to abide as far as possible by the American customs regulations where our exports to the United States were concerned, had unfortunately been in vain. Moreover, the most recent development could not but strengthen our suspicion that the action taken by America had resulted from causes other than the mandatory provisions of American laws. In view of the second American measure we had been compelled to suspend all forms of export promotion [assistance] in respect of

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the Tariff Act of 1930, see footnote 2 above.

<sup>4</sup> In telegram No. 126 of July 31 (6420/E479313-16) Ritter informed the Embassy in Washington that American Consulates in Germany had been sending circulars to this effect to German exporters since July 25. In telegram No. 128 of Aug. 3 (6420/E479319-22) Ritter stated that German firms could not be permitted by the Reich Government to complete the questionnaire and consequently every kind of export promotion scheme would be stopped with effect from Aug. 3, and gave instructions for a Note to be communicated to the State Department. For the text of this Note, as modified in accordance with telegram No. 135 to Washington of Aug. 7 (6988/E522273), see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. II, p. 249.

<sup>5</sup> In telegram No. 190 of Aug. 2 (6420/E479326-29) Luther reported that this decision had been made at the same time as the countervailing duties were imposed.

<sup>6</sup> A delegation consisting of Reichsbank Director Brinkmann, Ministerialrat Imhoff of the Reich Ministry of Economics and Counsellor Baer of the Foreign Ministry left for Washington on June 23 to negotiate on the countervailing duties. For these negotiations see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. II, pp. 241-246. Counsellor Baer remained in the United States until Sept. 30 for further discussions after the other members of the delegation had returned. Documents on the delegation's negotiations and on Baer's discussions and proposals have been filmed on Serials 6416, 6420, 6986 and 6988.

<sup>7</sup> i.e., the Treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Consular Rights of Dec. 8, 1923 (for text see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1923* (Washington, 1938), vol. II, pp. 29-45) as amended by the German-United States Agreement of June 3, 1935 (for text see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1935*, vol. II, p. 451).

exports to the United States with effect from August 3. The result of America's action would be a further very considerable falling-off of trade between the two States.

## II.

### The Sabotage Cases.<sup>8</sup>

On June 25 the American Embassy informed the Foreign Ministry by *Note Verbale*<sup>9</sup> that the American Government representative on the German American Mixed Commission, Bonyngé, and his assistant, Mr. Martin, would be coming to Germany for negotiations, and asked that on their arrival at Bremen they be granted the customs facilities permissible under German law. The Foreign Ministry acceded to this request, but was later informed by the Norddeutsche Lloyd that the two Americans had not arrived at Bremen. It later transpired that Bonyngé and Martin had gone to Munich and had there negotiated with Captain von Pfeffer about the sabotage proceedings. On July 6 and 10 of this year the persons in question signed a compromise<sup>10</sup> in which it was laid down that Germany recognized the claims of the sabotage plaintiffs to the extent of fifty per cent, plus interest, and undertook to cooperate in effectuating decisions by the Mixed Commission whereby a total of approximately twenty-five million dollars was awarded to the American plaintiffs. Bonyngé returned to America last month without taking the opportunity of calling at the Foreign Ministry.

The agreement prepared by Bonyngé and Pfeffer is at present being studied by the competent departments.

<sup>8</sup> The reference is to claims for compensation for damage resulting from alleged acts of sabotage committed by German agents in the United States prior to the entry of the United States into World War I. By the Claims Agreement of Aug. 10, 1922 (for text see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1922* (Washington, 1938), vol. II, pp. 262-264), adjudication of these and other claims against Germany arising during the course of World War I was referred to a Mixed Claims Commission, which also published reports of proceedings and decisions. German documents on this subject have been filmed on Serials 9803-05, 9807-08, 9810, 9817-18, 9824, K1914-15, K1925-28, M247 and M262-63. American documents on some phases of the negotiations are contained in the volumes of *Foreign Relations of the United States*; for documents on the phase of the negotiations here referred to see *ibid.*, 1936, vol. II, pp. 256-284.

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (K1914/K484248).

<sup>10</sup> For the text of an exchange of letters between Bonyngé and v. Pfeffer of July 1 and 6 see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. II, pp. 274-276; the minutes of the meeting of July 10 have been filmed as 9804/E689071-72.

## No. 504

218/147978-80

*Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division VII*BERLIN, August 10, 1936.  
zu Pol. VIII 685.<sup>1</sup>

I called on Colonel Thomas (Head of the Economic Defence Staff) on August 8. I told him, on behalf of Ministerialdirektor Ritter, that the latter, after the reorganization within the Foreign Ministry,<sup>2</sup> was now responsible for dealing with the "Hapro" treaties from the economic point of view and that he had long been intending to establish contact with Colonel Thomas in order to agree on practical cooperation between the two departments over the implementation of the project. Owing to Colonel Thomas having been on leave and the Olympic Games having then followed, it had not so far proved possible to put this intention into effect; Min[isterial]direktor Ritter would therefore ring up Colonel Thomas within the next few days and arrange for a conversation with him.

Colonel Thomas said that he was very glad of this; he too, he said, very much wanted to discuss the matter with Herr Ritter.

I then came to speak of the difficulties which, according to Herr Klein's telegrams<sup>3</sup> as well as to our own information, had arisen over implementing the agreement. On several occasions the Japanese Ambassador had made very serious representations to the Foreign Ministry about these treaties,<sup>4</sup> and we had informed the Embassies in Nanking and Tokyo about this and instructed them to keep us informed of further developments in the matter.<sup>5</sup> I then explained, basing myself on telegram No. 13 from Peking,<sup>6</sup> what the difficulties were in detail. Colonel Thomas asked for a copy of the telegram, which he read through again carefully. When he came to the passage concerning the replacement of the present military advisers by officers on the active list, he said that this was "a very sore point". In view of the various other difficulties that needed to be discussed, I avoided going more closely into this point. In order that the difficulties set forth in the telegram might be disposed of as soon as possible, I made the following suggestions to Colonel Thomas:

<sup>1</sup> Pol. VIII 685 may have been the number assigned to the telegram cited in footnote 2 to document No. 495.

<sup>2</sup> See Appendix I.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 495, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> See documents Nos. 281, 386, 461, and footnote 1 thereto, and 502.

<sup>5</sup> No other record of such instructions has been found.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 495, footnote 2.



1. That "Hapro" should abandon the reserve which it had hitherto maintained and should enter into discussions with the China firms. To this Colonel Thomas replied that he had already instructed General von Reichenau a week ago to get in touch with the Chamber of Commerce in Shanghai and receive Herr Nolte (Carlowitz & Co.).

2. With a view to weakening the impression that the German side were to supply only arms and armaments, I recommended that "Hapro" should make known as soon as possible what projects of a non-military kind it was planning (e.g., steelworks). Colonel Thomas agreed to this; one could, he said, mention, for instance, drilling machines, mining plant and the steelworks.

3. In order to allay the perturbation of the German China firms, I recommended that the transactions which "Hapro" wished to reserve to itself should be distinguished from those left to private firms. Such a distinction need not be made fundamental and definitive; it would be sufficient if, at the proposed discussions, the firms were told, case by case, what transactions were being left to them. Colonel Thomas stated that he entirely agreed with this proposal too and said that he would write to General von Reichenau in this sense by the next courier. In any case, the sum credited had already been allocated in the main for army and armament supplies, so that any collision with civilian supplies was out of the question for the foreseeable future.

Herewith respectfully submitted for their information to Ministerialdirektor Ritter and Minister von Erdmannsdorff.

V[oss]<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> The document here printed is countersigned: "B[en]zl[er], [Aug.] 11."

No. 505

3108/629368-73

*The Foreign Ministry to the Legation in Czechoslovakia*

SECRET

BERLIN, August 11, 1936.

W. Spec. 1276.

With reference to your despatch—A II f 3 Geh. Akten- of June 18<sup>1</sup> concerning financial support for the German community in Czechoslovakia.

For your strictly confidential information, I venture to enclose a copy of a memorandum of a conversation held on August 5, together with a memorandum on information from the Ossa dated August 8, and would request an early statement of your views.

In view of the great difficulties which the further treatment of your request will encounter from the finance and foreign exchange authorities, it is essential that there be submitted a plan of execution which,

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 382.



in addition to the political and economic aspects, also takes into account the technical implementation.

By order:  
SCHWAGER

[Enclosure 1]

BERLIN, August 5, 1936.  
e.o. W Spec. 1258.

#### MEMORANDUM

CONCERNING THE PRAGUE LEGATION'S REQUEST OF JUNE 18, 1936 (W Spec. 1080)<sup>1</sup> FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUND FOR THE PRESERVATION OF GERMAN LANDED PROPERTY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Since the previous papers (W Spec. 142<sup>2</sup> and 328)<sup>3</sup> showed that great technical difficulties were to be expected, the Referent of Kult. B, in agreement with the Referent of Pol. IV (Czechoslovakia), first of all arranged a meeting of a strictly limited number of persons on the Ossa's<sup>4</sup> premises (Dr. Winkler, Regierungsrat Krahmer-Möllenberg and Dr. Werner), and this meeting took place today. Dr. Altenburg was prevented from attending.

The Ossa regard a large-scale relief operation for the Sudeten German community as *technically* impossible of execution at present. How great are the transfer difficulties is shown by the fact that the Kreditanstalt der Deutschen in Prague,<sup>5</sup> which has something like 150 million Czech crowns deposited in Germany, has been unable, in spite of most vigorous efforts by the Ossa and the cooperative attitude of the German authorities concerned, to effect the transfer. Even the interest has not yet been transferred, despite the promises of the Reich Ministry of Economics and the Reichsbank. Otherwise the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen] could itself carry out those of the tasks set forth in your despatch which are economically justifiable. But even in the apparently most unlikely event of the Reich Finance Ministry granting a fairly sizeable sum and of the Reich Ministry of Economics approving the transfer, the Ossa sees no way, in view of the very stringent Czechoslovak foreign exchange control, of transferring the sum to a bank without betraying the provenance of these monies.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 382, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See *ibid.*, footnote 2.

<sup>4</sup> The Ossa Vermittlungs und Handelsgesellschaft, a Government controlled agency (also operating under the cover name of Excelsior G.m.b.H.), founded in 1926 and engaged in financing and promoting German economic interests in territories with German minorities. It was supervised by the Foreign Ministry through department Kult. B. See also Series D., vol. VII, App. III, Section (F.).

<sup>5</sup> See Document No. 382, footnote 3.

Of the tasks listed in points (1)–(4) of the despatch, only No. (1) is economically justifiable; the remainder however cannot be made economically plausible and no bank, least of all the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen], could accept them without making itself extremely vulnerable politically.

The Ossa regard the attitude of the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen] as reported on page 4 of your despatch as being due to a misunderstanding, since the extremely well managed and, even in present circumstances, thoroughly sound K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen] has always punctiliously dissociated itself from anything which might be interpreted by the suspicious State authorities as being of a political nature.

Any operation in aid of the Sudeten German community which might be contemplated for urgent political reasons could in no case therefore, in view of the circumstances, be carried out through a bank but at best through one of the professional [*berufsständische*] offices of the political organization. Even here the difficult problem of effecting transfer and camouflaging the funds would remain.

From the discussion it emerged that the following was the Ossa's opinion from the *practical* point of view:

In Czechoslovakia there prevails a general economic crisis from which the Germans are certainly suffering most, so that their standard of living has been depressed to a level which is hard to conceive. But even large sums would be insufficient to bring about an improvement. If, nevertheless, a start were to be made, it would be impossible to see how it would end.

SCHWAGER

[Enclosure 2]

SECRET

BERLIN, August 8, 1936.  
e.o. W. Spec. 1276.

#### MEMORANDUM

#### CONCERNING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FUND FOR THE PRESERVATION OF GERMAN LANDED PROPERTY IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

Yesterday Director Kiesewetter of the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen], who is mentioned in the Prague Legation's despatch A II-3 Geh. Akten of June 18, was in Berlin for a brief visit and the Ossa had an opportunity of questioning him.

Director Kiesewetter took the following line:

In Czechoslovakia a great collecting campaign is *quite openly* being set in train in aid of the distressed German community, and all the German community organizations are taking part in this; the proceeds

are being used to set up an *emergency fund* which will be administered according to published regulations, and by a committee likewise known to the public.

If this emergency fund reaches the sum of 10,000,000 Czech crowns, it will in fact be possible to do much good with the yearly interest of about 400,000 Czech crowns, and to save much threatened German property.

Provided that this proved to be the case, he had offered to make the K[reditanstalt] d[er] D[eutschen] available for the technical implementation of the distribution, but he could in no circumstances do the same for a political action which was financed from the Reich.

It was of course conceivable that, if the transfer and the camouflage were successful, the relief fund which had mainly been collected openly and demonstrably in Czechoslovakia could to some extent be augmented, through the intermediary of suitable persons or offices, by funds from the Reich.

Without the broad basis provided by an internal and public relief campaign this would be too dangerous.

SCHWAGER

## No. 506

147/78414-16

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 12, 1936.

RM 644.

After I had already met the Polish Under Secretary of State, Count Szembek,<sup>1</sup> several times in the last few days and had also, on these occasions, had political conversations with him, Count Szembek called on me today, accompanied by Ambassador Lipski.<sup>2</sup> Both in the earlier conversations and again today, Szembek's chief endeavour was to allay possible German susceptibilities about the visit of the French General, Gamelin, to Warsaw.<sup>3</sup> He repeatedly emphasized that the suggestion for the visit had come from Gamelin himself and that Poland could not have refused him. Moreover, it was a purely military affair and came within the scope of the Franco-Polish Military Alliance,<sup>4</sup> by which Poland was abiding. This Alliance was, however,

<sup>1</sup> Count Szembek visited Berlin, Aug. 6-17, 1936, as official Polish representative at the Olympic Games. For his accounts of his conversations in Berlin see Szembek: *Journal 1933-1939* (Paris, 1952), pp. 190-203; for the instructions given him by Beck prior to his departure from Warsaw see *ibid.*, pp. 188-190. See also Editors' Note, p. 896.

<sup>2</sup> For Szembek's account of this conversation see his *Journal*, pp. 194-196; for that of a conversation of Aug. 9 see *ibid.*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>3</sup> The Chargé d'Affaires in Warsaw reported on the background of General Gamelin's visit, due to commence on Aug. 12, in telegram No. 45 of Aug. 11 (7589/E543319-21).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 61, footnote 4.

purely defensive, and Poland's obligation to render assistance was confined to aid against a possible aggressor. Furthermore, Polish policy towards Germany was wholly unchanged. The Polish Government attached the greatest importance to the continuation and extension of good relations with Germany. The attacks made upon Minister Beck by Opposition circles could not alter this fact. The Polish Government were firmly resolved to keep to the course laid down for them by Marshal Pilsudski.<sup>5</sup> I told Count Szembek in reply that we were not perturbed about General Gamelin's visit. We were aware of the Polish-French Military Alliance and, where Polish policy *vis-à-vis* ourselves was concerned, I was convinced that the events in Spain and their effects would cause Poland, even if only impelled by the instinct of self-preservation, to continue to seek support from the only real element of resistance to Bolshevism in Europe, namely, Germany.

Count Szembek then came to speak of individual points in German-Polish relations. He welcomed the sending of Herr Vocke<sup>6</sup> for the continuation of the financial talks<sup>7</sup> and spoke with satisfaction of the exchange of Notes about the events in Danzig;<sup>8</sup> but he observed that it would seem to the Polish Government open to objection if a German warship were to visit Danzig once again so soon and if the same incidents which had taken place with the *Leipzig* were to occur again during the commander's visit. I told Count Szembek that I knew nothing about this visit at present.

Count Szembek then spoke of Poland's relations with the Little Entente, stressing that Polish relations with Rumania were good in spite of M. Titulescu's divagations, that relations with Yugoslavia were correct, and that those with Czechoslovakia were bad.

Finally, he asked about our reply to the non-intervention proposal,<sup>9</sup> which Poland too had received and had answered in a positive sense. I replied that we would do the same but that we had certain matters to settle with the Spanish Government beforehand.<sup>10</sup>

V. N[EURATH]

<sup>5</sup> Marshal Jozef Pilsudski (1867-1935).

<sup>6</sup> Wilhelm Vocke was a member of the Directorate of the Reichsbank; it may, however, be Ministerialrat Forkel, in the Reich Ministry of Economics, who is meant. In a memorandum of Aug. 10 (147/78412-13) Ritter noted that Schacht had agreed to Forkel's going to Warsaw at the end of the week.

<sup>7</sup> The reference is to negotiations on the German attempt to pay one-third of the arrears which had arisen in the Corridor transit traffic with bonds received under the liquidation of the I.G. Kattowitz-Königshütte Laura (see document No. 491). The Embassy in Warsaw reported on this in telegram No. 48 of Aug. 18 (5643/H000503-04); in a minute of Aug. 25 (5643/H000502) Senior Counsellor Schnurre noted that Ministerialrat Forkel had told him that Schacht had now dropped this demand.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 467, footnote 2.

<sup>9</sup> See vol. III of Series D, documents Nos. 32 and 37.

<sup>10</sup> The reference is to the detention by the Spanish authorities of a German aircraft and its crew; see vol. III of Series D, document No. 37 and Editors' Note, p. 37, and Szembek; *Journal*, pp. 194-195.



[EDITORS' NOTE: On August 12 Szembek also had separate conversations with Ribbentrop, Hitler and Göring. For Szembek's account of these see Szembek: *Journal 1933-1939* (Paris, 1952), pp. 196-201; no record of them has been found in the Foreign Ministry files.]

## No. 507

1159/326410-12

*Unsigned Memorandum*

Drafting Officer:

BERLIN, August 13, 1936.

Counsellor Braun von Stumm.

Pol. II 1370.

Gustav Wyns, the Rexist Party deputy in the Belgian Parliament, called at the Press Department of the Foreign Ministry on August 12.

He began by expressing a desire for assistance in purchasing German rotary machines which his party in Belgium needed to enable them to combat the Marxist *Peuple*. As all workers were forced to read this newspaper, which thus naturally exerted a powerful influence in favour of its own ideas, the Party had decided to bring out a Sunday newspaper with an edition of one million copies to be distributed free amongst the workers. He said that, under the influence of conditions in Spain and France, the situation in Belgium had reached so critical a stage that the industrialists associated with the Rexist Party had decided to make this sacrifice.

M. Wyns then expressed a desire to meet Dr. Goebbels, at least for a few minutes, in order thus to make a first contact. He hoped that it would later be possible to arrange a secret meeting with the leader of the Rexist movement, Degrelle, as had similarly proved possible some months ago with Mussolini, without anything reaching the ears of the public.

In this connexion M. Wyns, who described himself as the Rexist Party's spokesman on foreign affairs, began of his own accord to speak about the *Eupen-Malmédy* problem and stated that, if such a meeting were to take place, M. Degrelle would certainly set forth to the Führer the Rexist Party's view that the Eupen-Malmédy problem, which still remained a disturbing factor in German-Belgian relations, would have to be solved by means of a plebiscite. The Rexist Party's proposal was that the plebiscite should be held suddenly, without inflammatory propaganda, and, if necessary, with the Belgian and German sides restricted to one speech each; for, if the plebiscite was really to be a final act of settlement and reconciliation between Germany and Belgium, then it was clear that either side would have to refrain from agitation against the other, as this would undoubtedly have repercussions. He was of the opinion that in this way the German speaking

territory would return to Germany, whilst, judging by his own impressions, the Walloon territory around Malmédy would probably decide for Belgium. In any case, however, this territory too would not be refused the right to a plebiscite. Regarding the modalities of the plebiscite, M. Wyns thought that agreement could probably be reached in five minutes; e.g., as to whether the plebiscite should be held by separate communes or by larger districts. The Rexist party would naturally have to put forward the Belgian point of view when preparations for the plebiscite were being made, if only in order not to lay themselves open to the charge of surrendering Belgian national soil.

M. Wyns said that the Rexist Party was completely disinterested in the German-Austrian question, no matter how relations between Germany and Austria developed. Belgium could not think of intervening against Germany in any way on account of Austrian independence. In this case, too, the right of self-determination must be granted even if it worked out in Germany's favour.

M. Wyns then turned to the *colonial question* and stated that the Rexist Party was of the opinion that in this sphere too concessions must be made to Germany. He assumed that the German side did not intend to dispute Belgium's right to the Congo Colony. On the other hand it was not his impression that there was at present any intention on the British side of making any special concessions to Germany in practice; the same applied to Portugal, who was in fact, probably first on the list in any question of relinquishing colonial territories. He himself took the view that it would be best for all the African territories to be combined in some way and made available to the European States for their economic expansion, in which case Belgium, with her African colonial possessions, would not wish to remain aloof. For as time went by it would come to be realized more and more that European solidarity in Africa was more than ever necessary in face of the yellow peril in the East.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> A copy of the document here printed was forwarded to the Legation in Brussels under cover of despatch P 5969 of Aug. 21 (1425/362761-63) in which Aschmann stated that Wyns, who had made a good impression, had got no results yet in his negotiations for rotary machines; he had not been received by Goebbels, but he had been put in touch with other personalities.

## No. 508

2381/498935-38

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, August 14, 1936.

RM 650.

Pol. IV 2346.

This afternoon the leader of the Sudeten Germans, Herr Konrad Henlein, called upon me at the villa. I had arranged for this discussion with him on the evening of the day before yesterday. Herr Henlein gave me a brief account of the situation of the Sudeten Germans and emphasized particularly that his task was often made more difficult by extremist elements who had contacts with Germany. He was, however, firmly resolved to deal severely with these unruly elements and he had, indeed, made this clear to the Party authorities here.

I informed Herr Henlein that only yesterday I had been told by a Sudeten German who was here for the Olympic Games that it was being generally said in those circles that the German Reich was going to settle the Sudeten German question by the sword in the immediate future. Herr Henlein confirmed this information and pointed out that these rumours were often fostered by subordinate authorities in the Reich. He himself knew quite well that these were figments of the imagination, and he was trying to enlighten his people. I told him he should make vigorous efforts to do so, for there was no question of our becoming involved in warlike complications in the foreseeable future on account of the Sudeten Germans. The Sudeten Germans must first rely upon their own exertions in their struggle, and we would naturally give them moral and, as far as possible, financial support.

Herr Henlein, who in every way impressed me as being a most sensible and downright man, assured me that he was fully aware of this fact. He had for this reason also tried to enlist sympathy abroad for the sufferings of the Sudeten Germans. This had been the purpose of his last year's visit to Britain.<sup>1</sup> His visit this year,<sup>2</sup> which had been made in response to an express invitation from London, had enabled him to give certain political circles there an account of the circumstances of the Sudeten Germans and to point out that the Czech Government's present nationalities policy might one day cause the three and a half million Sudeten Germans to commit an act of despair. This

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<sup>1</sup> Henlein visited London in July and December 1935. During his second visit, on which Bismarck reported in despatch A 4571 of Dec. 11 (9127/E642209-11), he lectured at the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 465.

would mean the raising of the whole question, and he was convinced that this could not be a matter of indifference to the British, whose efforts were concentrated on maintaining peace in Europe. He had also had an invitation from Vansittart, amongst others, and in a two and a half-hour discussion had expounded all these arguments to him. He thought that his explanations had been understood, for Vansittart had assured him that the British Government would raise the Sudeten German question at the next session of the League of Nations. The Sudeten German petition which had been received in Geneva would provide them with the pretext to do so.<sup>3</sup> I told Herr Henlein that I too had drawn Mr. [sic] Vansittart's attention<sup>4</sup> to the importance of the Sudeten German question and had noticed that he was interested in it, as he saw in it a source of danger.

Herr Henlein then informed me that he had also been invited to Sweden to give a lecture there. He said he was highly gratified by his invitation to meet the Führer although, in the circumstances, the Führer had of course only been able to see him for a short time.<sup>5</sup> It was, however, of great value to him to be able to say on his return home that he had spoken to the Führer and that the Führer had expressed his sympathy. He had immediately called on the Czech Minister here and had also informed him that he had been invited to meet the Führer.

Herr Henlein then asked that he might be allowed to get in touch with me direct from time to time should circumstances require it, to which I of course agreed.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>3</sup> The reference is to a petition submitted to the League of Nations on April 24, 1936, by members of the Sudeten German Party, complaining that a decree relating to the placing of State contracts, issued by the Czechoslovak Ministry of Defence, discriminated against Sudeten Germans (91344/E642434-37).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 489, with footnotes 1 and 2 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

## No. 509

3245/E000071-72

*Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, August 16, 1936.

*Minute for the Führer.*

In accordance with my instructions<sup>1</sup> I have, during the last two weeks, been in negotiation with the Japanese Ambassador and with

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<sup>1</sup> No other record of these instructions has been found.



General Oshima<sup>2</sup> on the question of the conclusion of the Anti-Comintern agreement as well as of the proposed political agreement. The Ambassador informed me that his Government had in principle approved these agreements.

The following have still to be discussed:

1. The question of publishing the Anti-Comintern treaty.

The Japanese Government are apparently rather perturbed about the effect of publication, whereas Japanese military circles seem to be very much in favour of publication.

I convinced the Ambassador that it was only by being published that such an Anti-Comintern agreement would fulfil its purpose and give us the opportunity of beginning a large-scale diplomatic offensive against Bolshevism and of forming a bloc of anti-Bolshevist States. I furnished the Ambassador with the arguments; so that he can send an appropriate telegram to his Government.

As regards the most favourable moment for publication in the light of the world situation as a whole, I have requested the Japanese Government to leave the decision about this to Germany, as being the more exposed partner, but naturally after previous agreement with Japan.

2. The question of wording, since the Japanese Government are apparently recoiling somewhat from the effect of the preambles to the two treaties, which are couched in sharp terms for propaganda purposes.

I convinced the Ambassador of the necessity and usefulness of such sharp wording, and likewise furnished him with the necessary explanation so that he can convince his Government by telegram. In the last resort, we should have to find a compromise solution here.

The negotiations will probably be resumed at the end of next week or the beginning of the week after.<sup>3</sup>

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>2</sup> Japanese Military Attaché in Germany.

<sup>3</sup> No record of these negotiations has been found in the Foreign Ministry files; see also Editors' Note, p. 1138.

## No. 510

3245/E000073

*Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, August 16, 1936.

*Minute for the Führer.*

Subject: Vansittart's visit.<sup>1</sup>

Before he left, I had a conversation lasting several hours with

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 489, footnotes 1 and 2. In a memorandum of Aug. 11 (5849/E428103-04) Aschmann reported to Neurath details of an interview between Vansittart and Paul Scheffer of the *Berliner Tageblatt*. See also document No. 508.

Vansittart about the whole development of European politics since January 30. At the end of the conversation, which was very frank, Vansittart stated that on the whole he agreed with the Führer's reflections on future foreign policy, which I had expounded to him. To what extent this really is the case remains to be seen! To judge from the way in which, when he said goodbye, he expressed his thanks for our invitation, hopes of a certain change in his attitude towards Germany do not seem altogether unjustified.

R[IBBENTROP]

## No. 511

6110/E452442-61

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, August 17, 1936.

W I Gen. 5703.

With reference to our circular W 3935 of April 10, 1935.<sup>2</sup>

Since our previous despatch, German economic policy has set itself three tasks in particular:

1) To supply Germany with indispensable foreign raw materials and foodstuffs;

2) To increase the export of German goods. This task is directly connected with the first task. An increase in German exports is a prerequisite for an increase in the import of raw materials and foodstuffs;

3) To extend and technically to improve economic agreements and to adapt them systematically to the principles of the "New Plan".<sup>3</sup>

As regards the first two points, the Missions have been sent general instructions from the Foreign Minister, under W I Gen. 5845 of July 30, 1936.<sup>4</sup> Below are, first, details about the raw materials situation, then about the present state of the clearing system, and finally a survey of our economic relations with the more important countries or groups of countries.

## I.

The value of *imports of raw materials*, as shown in the trade statistics, has not declined in the last few months as compared with the earlier

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all German Missions and Consulates *de carrière*, with the exception of the Embassy to the Holy See.

<sup>2</sup> Vol. IV of this Series, document No. 22.

<sup>3</sup> For the "New Plan" see vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 175 and 207.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 485.

period. Nevertheless, the raw materials situation has become considerably more strained in the last few months. This is attributable to a variety of reasons. For one thing, the prices of raw materials have risen, so that the values shown statistically do not represent the same quantities. Again, the stocks which were formerly still available within the country have gradually diminished. Finally, the need for raw materials for various purposes has continued to grow.

A shortage of raw materials has recently appeared in various sectors of the German economy. At times or in places it has led to dislocations. Hitherto it has mostly been possible to remedy such dislocations rapidly by transferring the raw materials available within the country. But the situation as a whole has not thereby been changed. If in future more raw materials could not be obtained, more serious dislocations in Germany's industrial production would have to be expected. This is the reason for the urgent admonition by the Reich Minister in the circular under reference.

The most strained situation is that with regard to *rubber*. The occasional dislocations mentioned have appeared particularly in the industries dependent on rubber supplies. The second place in order of urgency in respect of the more important raw materials falls to *base metals* and their ores. Thirdly comes *cotton*; in this industry, too, temporary local disruptions have occurred. Fourthly comes *wool*, fifthly *petroleum* and petroleum products.

The German Missions abroad can perform valuable services to the German economy, especially in the near future, if they contribute to increased imports of the above-mentioned raw materials. You should study carefully all possibilities of doing this, drawing the attention of the trade circles at your end in an appropriate fashion to this necessity and, should occasion arise, sending us practical suggestions. This applies not only to the Missions in countries which themselves produce the raw materials mentioned, but also to those in countries from which the raw materials can perhaps be obtained in indirect trade. Rubber, and, of the base metals, copper, lead, and tin, are particularly needed.

## II.

Clearing agreements of various kinds have now been concluded with more than thirty countries. About 75 per cent of all German exports goes to these countries. These two figures show what importance clearing has acquired in the system of German trade policy.

That this method of maintaining trade with foreign countries has many defects is certainly no less well known to the central authorities here than at posts abroad. However, despite these defects, the system

has, on the whole, proved its worth in the given circumstances. In any case, two successes have been attained by it. First, it has been possible to keep the delicate and complex machinery of the German economy running for the last three years without, on the whole, any substantial disruptions, and indeed to step it up during this period; secondly, it has been possible to maintain the German currency. This would probably not have been possible without the cumbersome clearing system.

The question is often asked whether a return to the earlier conditions can soon be expected in this sphere, or whether the clearing system will be retained for a long time to come or even permanently.

In answering this question, one must proceed from the fact that the clearing agreements are only a consequence of the foreign exchange control. Until foreign exchange control is abolished, the clearing system as a whole cannot be abandoned either. But what are the preconditions for the abolition of foreign exchange control? First, the existence of a gold and foreign exchange reserve in the Reichsbank that will guarantee the stability of the German currency. Secondly, the stabilization of the other world currencies. Thirdly, the revision of German foreign indebtedness, since at its present level the transfer moratorium<sup>5</sup> cannot be cancelled. Fourthly, better conditions for the international exchange of goods, amongst which, for Germany, a more favourable regulation of the supply of raw materials must be included. These are only the most essential preconditions in the economic and financial sphere. These tasks, however, can scarcely be attacked with any prospect of success until there has been a political clarification and pacification. When all this is borne in mind, the answer emerges that the retention of the clearing system must be expected for a long time, probably for a good many years to come.

The lesson that Germany must draw in the long run from her bitter experiences with the collapse of international credit and of the free exchange of goods since 1931 points in the same direction. In future, German commercial policy will no longer be able, as in the past, to leave it to the hazard of technical production or market influences to decide from which countries Germany should obtain her indispensable raw materials and foodstuffs. It will be intent on seeing that these articles are obtained as far as possible from such countries as will be prepared and able to continue to supply Germany even in times of economic, financial or political crisis. The safeguarding of economic and political independence therefore makes it in the long run necessary to plan systematically our imports of raw materials and foodstuffs.

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<sup>5</sup> A moratorium on Germany's long and medium term debts, including the Dawes and Young loans, to take effect on July 1, 1934, had been declared by the Reichsbank on June 14, 1934. See also vol. II of this Series, documents Nos. 484 and 490.



Accordingly, since the clearing system must be retained for a long time yet, it is all the more important to diminish the defects adhering to it, and in particular to simplify clearing and divest it of red tape. Work is in constant progress on this task. The method of payment agreed with Britain a few years ago<sup>6</sup> has proved to be the best. It encroaches least of all upon the wonted usages of payment and is least hampering to trade in goods. It is therefore primarily in this direction too that the attempts at improvement are moving. Improvements in this direction have already been achieved with Belgium,<sup>7</sup> South Africa,<sup>8</sup> and Ireland.<sup>9</sup> Admittedly, the favourable condition which was present in the case of Britain is lacking with most countries, namely, that Britain was prepared from the outset to grant Germany a favourable balance of trade in the proportion of 100:55.

In the early days of clearing, concern was caused by the fact that, as a result of excessive German imports of goods, the clearing with a number of countries showed deficits. A fresh and considerable indebtedness towards foreign countries thus threatened to arise in the form of commodity debts. Meanwhile it has been possible to reduce the total value of the commodity debts as a result of closer supervision and adjustment of imports to exports. In addition, the mechanism of clearing has automatically compelled many foreign Governments to accord preferential treatment to Germany in the import of industrial products, in order that debts owed them for goods could be transferred and their own exports to Germany maintained. This development has, manifested itself in Europe, especially in the countries of the South-East; it has also become apparent in South America. There are indications from a number of countries that this tendency will continue. Recently, in this connexion, armaments orders, in particular, have been shifted to Germany.<sup>10</sup> In view of this development, this question is now no longer being viewed with so much concern as formerly, although it must of course remain our objective to eliminate the commodity indebtedness altogether.

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<sup>6</sup> For the Anglo-German Payments Agreement of Nov. 1, 1934, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXIII, pp. 79-102; see also vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 277 and 278.

<sup>7</sup> For the German-Belgian-Luxembourg Payments Agreement of July 27, 1935, see *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger*, No. 175 of July 30, 1935; for a Supplementary Protocol of Dec. 20, 1935, see *ibid.*, No. 303 of Dec. 30. Unpublished portions of the agreement of July 27, 1935, have been filmed as 8451/E595068-88.

<sup>8</sup> The German-South African Clearing Agreement of Dec. 18, 1935, has been filmed as M327/M013964-82.

<sup>9</sup> The reference is to the German-Irish Commercial Treaty of Jan. 28, 1935 (M328/M013986-14033), as renewed and amended by a protocol of Apr. 8, 1936 (M328/M014036-45), and an Exchange of Notes of Apr. 29, 1936 (M330/M014103-04).

<sup>10</sup> Marginal note in an unidentified handwriting on the document here printed, which is from the files of the Consulate General at Zurich: "For example, because of better supplies of steel".

The clearing system has been developed and improved in detail in many respects since our previous despatch. The foreign exchange certificates, which were originally only of importance for the transfer of payments, have meanwhile also acquired the function of import permits in the case of nearly all agricultural and some industrial products. It has thereby been made possible for the first time currently to effect a better adjustment of imports to exports and to the possibilities of transfer. Contrary to what had earlier been feared, this innovation has on the whole been carried out without any serious objections from foreign countries. Indeed, a number of Governments, e.g., the French, have suggested on their own initiative that the import of goods from the countries concerned be systematically adjusted to German exports. The fundamental purpose of the "New Plan" has thereby been properly achieved for the first time.

The number of clearing countries has been increased as a result of clearing agreements with Poland,<sup>11</sup> Lithuania,<sup>12</sup> Iran,<sup>13</sup> and Manchukuo.<sup>14</sup> With Austria, instead of the earlier agreement between the banks of issue, an agreement has now been concluded between the Governments.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to the system of general clearing, the system of individual compensation transactions and the system of "Aski" payments<sup>16</sup> (foreigners' special accounts for inland payments [*Ausländer-Sonder-Konto für Inlandszahlungen*]) have been developed with countries which have not concluded clearing agreements. But here abuses have become apparent, which have necessitated a restrictive supervision of individual compensation transactions and of "Aski" payments.

The expansion of clearing, and the closer control of imports in

<sup>11</sup> For the German-Polish Commercial Payments Agreement of Nov. 4, 1935, see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 390 and footnote 3 thereto; for the Agreement of July 18, 1936, supplementing the Commercial Payments Agreement, see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, pp. 293-294. See also Editors' Note, p. 942.

<sup>12</sup> For the text of the German-Lithuanian Payments Agreement of Aug. 5, 1936, see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, pp. 266-268; for the texts of the Commercial and Frontier Traffic Agreements signed the same day see *ibid.*, pp. 247-265 and 269-282. See also document No. 512.

<sup>13</sup> For the text of the German-Iranian Payments Agreement of Oct. 30, 1935, see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1935, Pt. II, pp. 889-91; a confidential supplementary agreement and exchanges of Notes of the same day have been filmed as M326/M013871-86.

<sup>14</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 499.

<sup>15</sup> Trade negotiations between Germany and Austria began in Berlin on July 27, 1936 and resulted in the initialling of a number of agreements on Aug. 12. The agreements, which were signed on Aug. 22, were (i) a Clearing Agreement (for the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, p. 292-); (ii) a Protocol on trade (for the text see *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger* No. 201 of Aug. 29, 1936); and (iii) an agreement on travel (see *ibid.*).

<sup>16</sup> Aski payments were non-transferable payments in Marks in Germany credited to the accounts of foreign exporters or banks in payment for imports into Germany. Such deposits could be made only under Government permit. Aski Marks could be used for certain purposes inside Germany and for the payment of certain classes of merchandise exported from Germany, whose manufacture did not necessitate the use of imported raw materials.

relation to exports which it has permitted, has at any rate resulted, in terms of statistics, in the deficit in the German balance of trade in the early months of 1935 being transformed into a surplus in the comparable months of 1936. But for the reasons expounded under (I), this change in the balance of trade has not led to an alleviation of the raw materials situation. Still less has it resulted in an alleviation of the foreign exchange situation. The amount of freely disposable foreign exchange accruing to the Reichsbank as the proceeds of exports has not increased, but is constantly becoming smaller. This is one of the undesirable consequences of the expansion of clearing. The Reichsbank now receives freely disposable sums in foreign exchange only from non-clearing countries (in so far as these sums are not also tied down here by individual compensation transactions or "Aski"<sup>17</sup>) and from those clearing countries which have undertaken to provide us with a freely disposable foreign exchange surplus. Unfortunately, it is precisely the most important raw materials, such as rubber, cotton, copper, tin, and zinc, which cannot be obtained, or can be only partly obtained, from clearing countries.

It will not have escaped the notice of the German Missions in a number of countries that the statistics for the trade in goods between their countries and Germany show an extensive change in purchases of raw materials and foodstuffs. This change is partly the result of a systematic application of the clearing method, but also partly an automatic effect of the mechanism of clearing. This change is particularly apparent in the case of some products, such as cotton (Brazil, Persia, Turkey, etc., have now taken the place of the United States, which was for decades the principal supplying country), or lard (similarly, a number of European countries have taken the place of the United States). For the reasons given above the change in the imports of these and other products will probably be a permanent phenomenon, unless the countries concerned should alter their trade policy towards Germany and be prepared for larger purchases of German goods.

### III.

As is appropriate to the diversity of the German export industry and the extensive distribution of German exports over all countries, German trade policy is naturally endeavouring to cultivate trade relations equally with all countries. In addition, German trade policy has set itself the task, in the last few years, of concentrating with particular intensity on suitable export areas one after another. Thus

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<sup>17</sup> The word "Aski" was erroneously omitted here; the addressees of the document here printed were instructed to make the appropriate correction on Aug. 18 (6110/E452462).



in the years 1933-34, the *countries in the Danubian Region*, including Greece and Turkey, were specially concentrated upon, and in the years 1934-35 the countries of *South America*. The success of this more intensive concentration can be seen from the trade statistics. At present, German trade policy is directing particular attention to the countries of the *Far East*, including British India, the Dutch East Indies and Siam. A trade mission was despatched a short time ago, under the leadership of Minister Kiep, "to the Far East,"<sup>18</sup> just as in 1934-35 to South America,<sup>19</sup> in order to study conditions there. The first tangible result of these endeavours took the form of the agreement with Manchukuo,<sup>14</sup> which facilitates the purchases of soya beans, which are at present still indispensable to Germany. We regard this as only the beginning of a more intensive concentration on the countries of the Far East. All German official authorities in this area should lend active support to these endeavours. Any relevant suggestion will be carefully followed up here.

A few observations about trade relations with individual countries follow:

#### *Europe:*

Trade relations with *Britain* are on the whole satisfactory.

They are also moderately satisfactory with the *Scandinavian countries*, and also with *Latvia* and *Estonia*. The interruption in the trade in goods with *Lithuania*, which has continued for some considerable time, has now been terminated by an agreement.<sup>12</sup> In the case of the Scandinavian countries and Finland, our endeavours are mainly directed to catching up gradually with Britain's economic lead where important goods were concerned, which she secured in connection with the devaluation of the pound and the inclusion of these countries in the sterling bloc.

The long economic war with *Poland* has been ended. We are trying, by means of very careful and attentive treatment of the available possibilities for doing business, gradually to recapture the Polish market which was lost as the result of the economic warfare and the economic crisis.

The countries in the *Danubian Region* have already been mentioned above. Trade relations have developed satisfactorily with Bulgaria, Hungary, Yugoslavia, Greece, and Turkey. The Governments of these countries are earnestly endeavouring to reduce the clearing surplus by higher imports of goods from Germany.

A few days ago, as a result of the political *détente* with Austria, it was

<sup>18</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 782.

<sup>19</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 30 and 492.



possible to conclude a first small economic agreement with Austria too.<sup>15</sup> It is the intention of both Governments to develop German-Austrian economic relations step by step and parallel with the political development. As a result of the first agreement a sum in Schillings, though admittedly not a very large one, is being set aside with a view to reviving travel from Germany to Austria. In addition, purchases of certain products whose export is important to Austria, such as wood and cattle, are being somewhat increased.

As regards the customs preference Treaty that was concluded some little time ago between *Czechoslovakia* and *Austria*,<sup>20</sup> Germany, on the basis of her most favoured nation right, has formally raised the claim to be placed on an equal footing where the preferential tariffs are concerned. In consequence of this, the Czechoslovak and Austrian Governments have decided not to put the open tariff preferences into effect. The reason for this attitude on the part of the Reich Government towards the preference treaty was that the Czechoslovak Government had previously stated repeatedly and unambiguously that this preference treaty was to constitute only the beginning of an economic reorganization of the countries in the Danubian Region under the aegis of Czechoslovakia and that Germany was to be excluded, at least temporarily, from this reorganization. The Reich Government could not add their support to such intentions by waiving their right to most favoured nation treatment.

With *Italy* it was possible to expand economic relations while sanctions were being enforced by other countries. It is the endeavour of German trade policy to maintain this advance permanently, as far as possible.

With *France* a rather curious trade policy relationship has existed for about a year. The liquidation of the German-French clearing, which was decided upon about a year ago,<sup>21</sup> has led to a situation in which, although it has been possible for German exports to France to be fairly well maintained on the whole, French exports to Germany have been reduced to a third of the value of the German exports. Germany could rest content with this situation as such. But it is striking that even now France is still allowing this situation to continue, although the liquidation of the clearing can be regarded as having been completed some time ago. It can probably be assumed that fresh negotiations, and probably once again difficult ones, will begin with France in the autumn.

Relations with *Switzerland*, which were unsatisfactory for both

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<sup>20</sup> For the Austrian-Czechoslovak Commercial Agreement of Apr. 2, 1936 and for the additional protocol of July 9, 1936, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. CLXXX, pp. 51-439. See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 543 and 593, and the present volume, document No. 129.

<sup>21</sup> See document No. 214, footnote 1.

parties, have recently been somewhat improved for Germany by new agreements.<sup>22</sup> But the present settlement is not tolerable for any length of time, either. The fresh negotiations planned for the end of this year will probably once again lead to vehement differences.

Similarly, the fresh negotiations with *Holland*, which are due during the next few months, will be stubbornly conducted, since in respect of that country an improvement in German purchases of raw materials must be secured.

Trade relations with *Russia* were unsatisfactory during the year 1935. The Russian Government have systematically boycotted Germany in their purchases of goods, whereas Germany has not been able to refrain from continuing to obtain considerable quantities of certain raw materials from Russia. The balance of trade with Russia has therefore shown a deficit for Germany during the year 1935. In the last few months an improvement has taken place, now that a new agreement for the exchange of goods for 1936 has been concluded.<sup>23</sup> At the end of the year 1935, discussions were for a short while carried on about a new, large, long-term goods credit for Russia.<sup>24</sup> The discussions were at that time broken off by Germany and they have not been resumed in the meantime.

#### *America:*

Trade relations with the *United States of America* are very unsatisfactory. The repeated attempts made by Germany in the past twelve months to reach an agreement about reciprocal most favoured nation treatment have come to nothing. Evidently, in the first place because the Government in Washington do not, for domestic reasons, wish to come to an understanding with Germany. It can hardly be assumed that this attitude on the part of the United States will change before the Presidential elections. As far as the situation can be judged at present, it will also be difficult even after the Presidential elections to find any basis for an understanding on trade policy. Recently trade relations with the United States have deteriorated still further as a result of the fact that the Treasury in Washington has decreed countervailing duties on German goods if their export has been promoted by the familiar procedure.<sup>25</sup> The Reich Government have consequently

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<sup>22</sup> There were signed at Berlin on July 6, 1936, a supplementary agreement to the German-Swiss Clearing Agreement and a supplementary agreement to the German-Swiss Commercial Agreement; for their texts see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, pt. II, pp. 223-228. Unpublished exchanges of Notes and Protocols of the same day have been filmed on Serial 6050. Documents on German-Swiss commercial relations have been filmed on Serials 4050, 6041, 6105 and 8557.

<sup>23</sup> See document No. 302.

<sup>24</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 386, 472, 483, 489, 490 and 502.

<sup>25</sup> See document No. 469 with footnote 6 thereto and document No. 503 and footnote 4 thereto.

found themselves compelled to stop the granting of subsidies of any kind in respect of the export of goods to the United States. The consequence will be that the meagre exchange of goods that still remains between Germany and the United States will be further reduced.

This customs policy conflict with the United States involves the danger that other countries having similar tariff legislation, such as Canada, South Africa, and Australia, might also be induced by the American example to apply their legislation concerning extra tariffs against Germany in cases of export bounties being granted. The Missions in such countries should pursue this question with particular attention and report on it should occasion arise.

Trade with the *Central American States* had developed in the way that was forecast in the circular W 1490 of April 23, 1934<sup>26</sup> (not sent to all Missions). Purchases of the most important export article of these countries, namely, coffee, had to be greatly reduced, since these countries could not or would not correspondingly increase their imports of goods from Germany. Nevertheless, the export of goods from Germany to these countries has on the whole been maintained, so that, regarded in terms of statistics, Germany's trade with these countries has improved. If, in future, these countries import more goods from Germany, Germany will be prepared once again to buy more coffee.

It would take too long to deal in detail with the development of trade with all the *South American States*. On the whole, the exchange of goods with these countries has developed in a gratifying way, a fact which has particularly benefited the supply of certain raw materials to Germany. In many South American States a willingness to buy more German goods can be perceived. The relatively small purchasing power of these States, however, and their economic or financial commitments to other States, set limits here.

Particular attention must be paid to the fact, with regard to the future development of trade policy *vis-à-vis* South America, that the Government of the United States are making every effort to hinder the progress of German trade in South America. These attempts at obstruction by the United States have been clearly perceptible in the case of several South American States, and especially in the recent negotiations with Brazil. Hitherto, the Governments of South America have resisted this pressure by the United States fairly well. The Missions in South America should follow this development attentively and report on it. It still remains an objective of German trade policy to cultivate economic relations with South America with particular care and to expand them as a long-term proposition.

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<sup>26</sup> These instructions, which relate to German import of coffee, are not printed (7105/E527237-45).



*Africa:*

The exchange of goods with *South Africa* is increasing slowly but steadily. The same applies to *Egypt*.

At present the treaty position with *Abyssinia* remains obscure. The Reich Government intend to make use of the formal recognition of Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia, which will come sooner or later, to clarify Germany's commercial treaty position *vis-à-vis* Abyssinia. German business circles wish to participate in the expected economic development of Abyssinia. The Reich Government support these aspirations and hope to be able to do this in agreement with the Italian Government.

As regards trade relations with the other African territories under colonial rule, we continue to take the view here that these territories offer German exports few opportunities for the future. It therefore remains a general objective of German trade policy to shift, so far as possible, the previous imports of raw materials and foodstuffs from Africa to other areas which are able and willing to take more German goods in exchange.

*Asia:*

The general intentions of German trade policy in the Far Eastern area have already been set forth above.

Trade relations with *Japan* have been strengthened as a result of the conclusion of the treaty with Manchukuo<sup>14</sup> mentioned above.

Recently, negotiations have been conducted and agreements arrived at with *China*;<sup>27</sup> they have not, however, yet led to complete clarification.

So far as can be judged from here, possibilities of increasing German exports are at present offering in *British India*. We are therefore specially counting on the German official authorities in British India actively to support trade.

We are attempting, in pursuance of the journey by the Kiep Mission,<sup>18</sup> to increase the exchange of goods with *Siam* as well.

As regards the *Near East*, the exchange of goods with *Turkey* has developed very satisfactorily. The other countries in the Near East also appear—within the narrow limits set by their purchasing power—to offer prospects of an increase in German exports. For your own information only at present, I would add that, in order to study and exploit these possibilities, we are intending to send out a small study mission to these countries in the near future, this to consist of leading personalities in private industry.

<sup>27</sup> See document No. 270.



Relations with *Australia* are not very satisfactory, either with regard to the treaty position or with regard to the exchange of goods. Conversations about an improvement have been in progress for quite some time.<sup>28</sup> In view of the political commitments of the Government there, and their sluggishness in trade policy, it is uncertain whether these conversations will lead to any progress being made.

The account I have given in this circular of Germany's present position with regard to trade policy and the aims of the Reich Government has been fairly detailed, in order to arouse the interest of Missions in the sense of the Minister's circular W I Gen. 5845 of July 20, 1936,<sup>4</sup> and in order to make it easier for them to see beyond the limits of their own areas of competence and reveal to them possibilities for activity on their part. I would also take this opportunity of asking Missions to cooperate, especially in the near future, in the task of increasing German exports of goods and of importing the necessary raw materials. The activity of Missions in this sphere will be followed with particular attention here in the Foreign Ministry as also in the other Reich Ministries concerned.

By order:  
RITTER

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<sup>28</sup> Documents on German-Australian commercial relations have been filmed on Serial 6412.

## No. 512

5926/E435589-91

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

W IV O.E. 1517

BERLIN, August 18, 1936.

On August 5, 1935, the German-Lithuanian Economic Agreements<sup>2</sup> were signed at the Foreign Ministry. The individual Agreements are as follows:

- (1) Agreement on the reciprocal exchange of goods, with a settlement of veterinary questions;
- (2) An Agreement on trade payments;
- (3) A Protocol on regulations governing labour permits and permits of residence;
- (4) An Agreement on local frontier traffic.

The German-Lithuanian Treaty of Commerce and Navigation of October 30, 1928<sup>3</sup> remains in force concurrently with these Agreements.

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<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Paris, London, Rome, Warsaw, Moscow, Tallinn, Riga and Kovno, and the Consulate General in Memel.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 511, footnote 12.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the German-Lithuanian Treaty of Commerce and Navigation, with Final Protocol, signed at Berlin on Oct. 30, 1928, see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LXXXIX, pp. 127-169.

This has to a large extent paved the way for the normalization for which we are striving in economic relations between Germany and Lithuania. At the time of the signing of the Agreements the Lithuanian Minister was informed of the significance of the Agreements over and beyond the purely economic aspect as follows:

We appreciated with satisfaction that, after difficult negotiations,<sup>4</sup> a treaty had materialized which could be advantageous to the economic interests of both countries. Apart from the purely economic aspect, however, we had concluded the treaty primarily with the intention of promoting the normalization of German-Lithuanian relations in the political sphere as well. But this aim could only be realized if Lithuania also worked along the same lines and in the same spirit. We must therefore expect that apart from fulfilling the new Treaty Lithuania's future policy *vis-à-vis* Germany would show an accommodating and understanding attitude. This meant, in particular, that, by most exactly observing the Memel Statute<sup>5</sup> in the Memel Territory, the Lithuanian Government would pursue a policy that would enable us to continue with the *détente* we had initiated.

From the economic aspect the agreement can be considered as advantageous to Germany. It ensures us supplies of raw materials and agricultural produce from Greater Lithuania and the Memel Territory and paves the way for our export industry to recapture the Lithuanian market lost to us through economic warfare. In the lengthy negotiations one question was, from the beginning, of primary importance, that of how to get the export wishes of the Memel Territory put through in such a way as to give constructive aid in the economic sphere to the German population of the Memel Territory over a long period.

In spite of Lithuanian resistance, it has been possible to a large extent to get these requirements put through, which proves how pressing is Lithuania's need for a readjustment of her trade relations with Germany. Thus we have been able to solve satisfactorily the question of the unrestricted purchase of 20,000 pigs and the question of the export of cheese, cattle for breeding and slaughter, stud-horses, grain, etc., from the Memel Territory to Germany. It has also largely been possible, in the question of local frontier traffic, to reconcile the interests of East Prussia and those of the Memel Territory in respect of goods and passenger traffic.

In addition, the following can be said of the individual Agreements: The Trade Agreement provides scope for the exchange of goods to the value of 30,000,000 Lit[as]=12.5 million RM for both imports and exports during the next twelve months. The Trade Agreement

<sup>4</sup> See also documents Nos. 329, with footnote 3 thereto, and 441.

<sup>5</sup> The Statute of Memel was attached as Annex 1 to the Convention concerning the Territory of Memel, signed at Paris on May 8, 1924; for the text see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. XXIX, pp. 85-115; see also vol. III of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 137.

provides for the appointment of Government committees which will in future be charged with the supervision of economic relations. The Payments Agreement contains nothing special. In order to ensure that it will operate even during the introductory period, both sides shall mobilize the old frozen trade debts and deposit them in clearing accounts. The Agreements are, in the first place, to run for one year and may thereafter be terminated at three months' notice. They contain the usual disaster clauses (see Article 5 of the Trade Agreement).

One copy each of the signed Agreements are attached as enclosures.<sup>6</sup>

By order:  
SCHNURRE

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<sup>6</sup> Not printed; see footnote 2 above.

## No. 513

147/78418-19

### *Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, August 18, 1936.

The State Secretary in the Polish Foreign Ministry, Count Szembek, called on me yesterday; he was accompanied by the Polish Ambassador. Count Szembek began by asking me to transmit to the appropriate quarters his thanks for the overwhelmingly friendly reception accorded to him in Berlin.<sup>1</sup> I promised to do so. The conversation then turned to political questions, and primarily to the Danzig question. We were in agreement that the discussions on the Danzig problems in the last few weeks had not done any harm to German-Polish relations but that, on the contrary, the way in which the incident caused by the omission of the visit by the Commander of the *Leipzig* to the League of Nations Commissioner had been settled had been particularly amicable.<sup>2</sup> It struck me, however, that Count Szembek very strongly emphasized that any alteration of the Danzig Statute was an important matter for Poland and that even a modification of the position of the League of Nations in Danzig would prejudice Polish rights. If anything of the sort was desired by Danzig or Germany, it must be clearly stated in order that Poland could set forth her point of view, for it was clear that Poland was unwilling to renounce any rights in Danzig.

I told Count Szembek that to my knowledge the conflict had at first centred only on the person of the League's Commissioner, Lester, and

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 506, footnote 1.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 419, 443 and 467 with footnote 2 thereto.

that the question of the position of the League of Nations in Danzig had only been touched upon theoretically in Greiser's speech.<sup>3</sup> As long as the question had not in fact been brought up for discussion, there was probably no point in talking about it. I then asked whether Warsaw had yet given any thought to the settlement in Upper Silesia, which must be achieved in some form or other after June 15, 1937.<sup>4</sup> Count Szembek answered this question in the negative, and I did not go into it further. The conversation ended with Count Szembek saying again how pleased he was to have had an opportunity of meeting the leading personalities in Berlin and that he had become convinced of the friendly atmosphere towards Poland.<sup>5</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>3</sup> Of July 4; see document No. 430, and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> The date of expiry of the German-Polish Convention on Upper Silesia, signed at Geneva on May 15, 1922, was in fact July 15, 1937; for the text see *B.S.F.P.*, vol. 118, pp. 365-579.

<sup>5</sup> For Szembek's account of this conversation see Szembek: *Journal*, p. 203.

## No. 514

2431/513986-89

*The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

No. 1059

WASHINGTON D.C., August 18, 1936.

Received August 23.

Pol. IX 934.

Subject: Roosevelt's speech on foreign policy.

With reference to my report No. 1016 of August 3<sup>1</sup> and to the DNB telegrams of August 14 and 15<sup>2</sup>.

Enclosed I submit the text of the speech which President Roosevelt made at Chautauqua on August 14<sup>3</sup> as reported in full by DNB that same day.

Chautauqua is a summer resort near New York where popular courses of an ideological, often religious nature, with pacifist tendencies, have regularly been held during the holiday season. A large community attends these courses every year; it comprises mainly members of the middle class.

The choice of such a forum for a declaration on foreign policy such as this speech represents was due mainly to motives of domestic policy. Roosevelt could be sure that his statements, directed towards the preservation of peace, would meet with unqualified applause there.

But, in addition, he wanted by means of radio and press to draw the attention of the whole American electorate to the successes of his foreign policy so far and to make clear to them in a strongly worded

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (6336/E472699-704).

<sup>2</sup> Neither found.

<sup>3</sup> For the text see *Public Papers and Addresses of Franklin D. Roosevelt* (New York, 1938), vol. 5, pp. 285-292.



programme, that in particular the international situation would make it appear advisable to continue to keep him and his trusted Secretary of State, Hull, at the helm of foreign policy.

The general approval the speech has received in the press, even—although less enthusiastically—in the Republican press, proves that this experienced mass psychologist has once again struck the right chord. The passages in the speech devoted to foreign policy may be taken as an expression of the present-day ideas on foreign affairs held by the vast majority of the American people.

But the speech also deserves to attract attention abroad since there can be no doubt that what Roosevelt said conforms to his real attitude and not only to that adopted for his election campaign. The European may smile ironically when the Head of a State, which has taken possession of the vast continent by wars and by the breach of many treaties, declares that he seeks for no territorial expansion and hates war and the use of force; or when, with puritanical self-complacency from which he certainly tries of his own accord to dissociate himself at one point in his speech, he criticizes other nations who have ignored the sanctity of treaties and pursued imperialist aims. It may be thought surprising that an American President should hold up peaceful America as an example to peaceless Europe, without mentioning that Europe's lack of peace is largely the outcome of the policy of his predecessor, Woodrow Wilson, which was never neutral and which subsequently failed in its differently directed aims. The fact remains that Roosevelt, in practice, will keep to what he has said if he remains at the helm.

Apart from his statements about the "nations violating agreements" and the "economic and political fanaticisms in which are intertwined race hatreds", which the press here immediately applied to Germany and Italy, but which derive their particular domestic importance from the fact that Roosevelt's powerful opponents refer to him in one breath as a Communist, and a slave of Wall Street, a Fascist Dictator and a gullible internationalist, Roosevelt's impressive assurance that he wants to keep his country out of any non-American conflicts by observing the most strict neutrality, and his warning to his compatriots not to allow themselves to be drawn into a war by their greed for profits, received special attention here. In fact his speech indicates a clear and, as far as one can foretell the future of these questions, a definite departure from the Lansing,<sup>4</sup> Morgan<sup>5</sup> and McAdoo<sup>6</sup> spirit that brought America into the World War.

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<sup>4</sup> Robert Lansing, U.S. Secretary of State, 1915–1920.

<sup>5</sup> J. P. Morgan.

<sup>6</sup> William G. McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury, 1913–1918, Senator from California, 1933–1939.

Worthy of particular note are also the statements which Roosevelt devoted to the improved relations with his Southern neighbours—which have long been the show-piece of his foreign policy. It will undoubtedly be his aim to improve these relations further. In future these aims will be encountered throughout Latin-America, in the political, as well as in the economic and cultural fields. Roosevelt's words at the end of his speech: "We can and will defend ourselves *and our neighbourhood*" point to the trend of the new Pan-American doctrine, whose slogan is "all for each and each for all" but which is fundamentally not much more than a present-day version of the old Monroe doctrine.

Copies of this report and a collection of press clippings on the speech will follow by the next diplomatic bag for reasons of economy.

LUTHER

## No. 515

408/215088-104

*Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Foreign Minister Neurath*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, August 20, 1936.

DEAR FOREIGN MINISTER: I enclose the "Observations on the Negotiations for a Western Pact" as discussed by us here in accordance with your instructions,<sup>2</sup> and drafted by Herr Gaus. Perhaps these notes may serve as a basis for possible conversations at Berchtesgaden.

I have nothing further to add to today's telephone report on the *Kamerun* incident<sup>3</sup> and on French and British pressure in the question of the arms embargo.<sup>4</sup> No new *démarche* has taken place today.

Yours etc.,

DIECKHOFF

[Enclosure]

### OBSERVATIONS ON THE NEGOTIATIONS FOR A WESTERN PACT

In the diplomatic preparations for the projected Five Power Conference on a new Western Pact, the following points amongst others

<sup>1</sup> A copy of the enclosed memorandum was also sent by Dieckhoff to Ribbentrop with a covering letter of Aug. 27 (3317/E007738). In his reply of Sept. 4 (3317/E007750), Ribbentrop stated that he had read Gaus' *exposé* and in principle could only agree with it; he suggested further discussion with Dieckhoff during the Party Rally.

<sup>2</sup> No other record of these instructions has been found.

<sup>3</sup> The *Kamerun*, a German merchant ship, had been stopped on the high seas by a Spanish cruiser, taken to a Spanish port and searched; see vol. III of Series D, documents Nos. 46 and 48.

<sup>4</sup> See vol. III of Series D, documents Nos. 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 45, 46 and 48.

will presumably very soon come up for discussion, and we shall have to be clear as to what language we are to hold on them.

I. *The general scope of the Conference programme.*

(1) From the text of the London Communiqué of July 23, 1936,<sup>5</sup> agreed by the British, French and Belgian Governments, on which the invitation issued to Germany and Italy is based, and the reply given by Germany and Italy to this invitation, it may be taken for granted that only Germany, Britain, France, Italy and Belgium will participate in the Conference, and that the one essential item in the programme will be the replacement of the old Rhine Pact of Locarno by a new Western Pact. During the discussion of the Western Pact, however, the question of Germany's re-entry into the League of Nations will of course also come up of its own accord as also to a certain extent the question of a reform of the Covenant of the League of Nations (cf. the observations under II below). On the other hand concrete discussion of questions like the Eastern Pact and the Danubian Pact is excluded from the start. Although at the close of the London Communiqué of July 23 it is envisaged that, should the consultations on the Western Pact progress successfully, other problems connected with the safeguarding of European peace will also be reviewed, we do not need to protect ourselves in advance against so general a prospect (which in no way materially commits us) of other problems being dealt with later on. Indeed, the German Peace Plan of March 31, 1936,<sup>6</sup> suggested that, after the question of the Western Pact had been settled, other international problems, such as checking the arms race, should be made the subject of special conferences.

(2) In addition to the replacement of the old Rhine Pact by a new Western Pact, the London Communiqué also mentions the task of the Five Power Conference as being to resolve the situation created by the German action of March 7. This is, however, obviously a purely formal concession to the French, which, as things are, can hardly create any serious difficulties. The other Powers are in no doubt that the Reich Government would in no circumstances be prepared to discuss any limitation of their sovereignty in the Rhineland. The situation created by the German action of March 7 cannot therefore be resolved by a new international statute of some kind being agreed for the Rhineland, but only by the conclusion between the Five Powers of a new, fully paritative security pact and one not weighed down by any one-sided limitations on German sovereignty.

<sup>5</sup> For the Communiqué see Editors' Note, p. 819; for the German and Italian replies see document No. 489 and footnote 3 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 242.



(3) The negotiations on such a pact will naturally also include an attempt to realize the project of an air pact between the five Western Powers, that is of an agreement on rendering assistance against sudden air attacks. Such an agreement, as originally proposed in the earlier London Communiqué of February 3, 1935,<sup>7</sup> was from the start seen as supplementary to the old Rhine Pact of Locarno, and would therefore now form part of the negotiations for a new Western Pact. Within what limits and what framework Germany could consider special agreements on the rendering of assistance in the air, is a question (which will be further discussed under III below) of what form the contents of the Western Pact would assume. We shall not, however, be able to oppose the inclusion of this matter in the Conference programme altogether. In Point 5 of the offer made in our Memorandum of March 7, 1936,<sup>8</sup> we say that the Reich Government are prepared, in order further to strengthen the security agreements between the Western Powers, to conclude an air pact calculated to prevent automatically and effectively the danger of sudden air attacks. This offer is repeated in Point 13 of the German Peace Plan of March 31, 1936.<sup>9</sup>

(4) On the other hand there can be no question of extending the Conference programme to include the problem of a *limitation of air forces*.<sup>10</sup> As is known, the British, in their questionnaire of May 6, 1936,<sup>11</sup> stressed that they would consider it highly desirable for the air pact between the Western Powers to be supplemented by a regional pact for a limitation of air strengths. It is impossible to understand how they can expect Germany to participate in an agreement of this kind limited to the Western Powers. Our argument that a limitation of air forces would not be possible in a regional form, but only in a universal form, with the inclusion in particular of Soviet Russia and Czechoslovakia, is irrefutable. Nor need we fear that this argument might perhaps give rise to the idea of extending the proposed Conference to include Soviet Russia, etc. Were it to be so extended, the nature of the Conference to which we have been invited would be entirely changed.

<sup>7</sup> The Joint Declaration issued on behalf of H.M. Government in the United Kingdom and the Government of the French Republic as a result of the conversations between the British and French Ministers in London, Feb. 1-3, 1935. For the text see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5. See also vol. III of this Series, document No. 479 *et passim*.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 3, enclosure.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 242.

<sup>10</sup> Typewritten marginal note on another copy (7441/E540201-16): "N.B. The new British Note of Sept. 17 [document No. 546, enclosure] contains no indication that the British are seeking to include the question of *air disarmament* in the conference programme".

<sup>11</sup> See document No. 313, enclosure.



II. *The Western Pact and the French Treaties of Alliance.*

The relation of the proposed new Western Pact to France's Treaties with Poland, Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia will be one of the chief problems of the negotiations and will undoubtedly come up for discussion during the preliminary diplomatic conversations too. It might well not be in Germany's interests to shelve this problem during the preliminary diplomatic conversations and simply to leave it for the Conference to solve, since to convene the Conference without this point having been sufficiently clarified beforehand would be a step in the dark, and might very easily lead to a sensational *débâcle* for which Germany would probably be held responsible.

In our Peace Plan of March 31, 1936, we proposed as the keystone of the Western Pact an undertaking by Germany for her part, and by France and Belgium for their part, not to proceed to attack one another. If this proposal were to be realized strictly, i.e., if no exceptions to this obligation not to attack on either side were permitted, then France and Belgium would be forced to remain at peace with Germany even in the event of Germany, for her part, being involved in a warlike conflict with third States. France would therefore have to refrain from any military intervention in such cases and would have to annul her Treaties of Alliance with the above-mentioned States. It is obvious that for political reasons France would not be prepared to do this and that from the formal legal aspect too she would not be in a position to do so. The vehement French criticism of the German Peace Plan, which began as soon as the plan was made public, was chiefly based on the view that Germany's proposal was designed to fence France off from Europe, in order to gain a free hand in the East. France will therefore insist on having the new non-aggression pact with Germany so framed as to leave room for France to fulfil her alliance obligations. This gives rise to the serious question of whether these French interests can be taken into account in any form whatever which would be acceptable to Germany.

The negotiations about the old Rhine Pact met with the same problem, as at that time France already had her Treaties of Alliance with Poland and Czechoslovakia. The 1925 solution was arrived at by stipulating certain exceptions to the mutual obligation to refrain from war (basing these on the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations) and so wording these stipulations that they accorded with the provisions of the French Treaties of Alliance. Of primary importance here was the provision in the old Rhine Pact that the agreed renunciation of war would not apply in the event of an action on the basis of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations. As is known, Article 16 provides for the so-called sanctions procedure of the League of Nations. Under this Rhine Pact provision, therefore, France was

permitted to take military action against Germany when such action constituted a sanctions measure under Article 16. There still, however, remained open the decisive question of what preconditions were in fact required to enable French military intervention against Germany to claim the character of a sanctions measure in the sense of Article 16 and in particular whether France, in the event of Germany being involved in a conflict with a third State, could, independently and at her own discretion, declare Germany to be the aggressor and thereupon proceed to impose sanctions on Germany, or whether this must depend on the Council of the League of Nations first adopting a resolution. When last summer France concluded her Alliance with Soviet Russia and explicitly claimed the right, which had not been the case in her earlier Treaties of Alliance, to take military action at her own discretion in favour of Soviet Russia against Germany and even without the League of Nations Council having first passed a resolution, the problem imposed itself in its full acuteness. We protested against the French point of view and finally made our opposing point of view the legal basis of our Rhineland action of March 7.

There can be no question of our now countenancing, in the Western Pact, a solution of the problem modelled on the old Rhine Pact, or of thus acknowledging the point of view adopted by France in her Pact with Soviet Russia. Were we to do so we should not only belie the legal basis of our Rhineland action, but should also, from the political point of view, expressly legalize the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance, which is directed against Germany.

We might consider removing or at least diminishing this consequence by insisting that the legal standpoint which we adopted at the time of our action in the Rhineland be recognized, and by seeking to have it laid down that military action by any country only comes under Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations when it is based on an express resolution by the Council of the League of Nations. This would bring us into the sphere of an authentic interpretation, that is, in effect, a reform of the Covenant of the League of Nations, which judging by previous experience, would hardly be likely to lead to a satisfactory outcome. It has everywhere been recognized, particularly after the course taken by the Italo-Abyssinian conflict, that it is impossible to realize the concept of military sanctions, given the means and the procedures of the Covenant of the League of Nations. For this reason the League of Nations politicians, particularly the French and also the British, have of late been inclined to render the sanctions procedure effective, not by altering the Covenant of the League of Nations itself, but by supplementing the Covenant by special regional agreements, which in their turn lay down concrete provisions for the execution of military sanctions.

Another theoretical possibility would be for us to advocate that the provisions of the Western Pact should be completely separated from the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations and that France's authority to take military action against Germany in the event of a conflict with a third State should be made dependent on all the parties to the Western Pact, apart from France and Germany, that is to say Britain, Italy and Belgium, unanimously declaring Germany to be the aggressor in this conflict. France might agree to this because an agreement of this kind would somewhat resemble the structure of her Treaty with Soviet Russia, which, as is known, provides for France to refrain from going to Soviet Russia's aid if, in so doing, she should make herself liable to sanctions on the part of Britain and Italy. By such an arrangement, Germany might perhaps gain a certain guarantee against arbitrary intervention by France, in so far as such intervention would be made directly dependent on the approval of Britain and Italy. A solution of this kind would, however, not be truly satisfactory for Germany, since there would always remain the fact that we would still be legalizing, albeit with certain modifications, the Franco-Soviet Treaty, which is directed against us. As there is no thought of Germany entering into corresponding treaties of alliance against France, the operation of which she would have to secure through the Western Pact, the Western Pact would always be weighted to Germany's disadvantage. All cogitation on the problem ultimately leads to the conclusion that a real and definitive treaty guarantee of peaceful relations between Germany and France will not be possible as long as French policy refuses to renounce intervention in Central European and Eastern European conflicts.

From the tactical point of view, it might be desirable for us, during the diplomatic preparations for the Five Power Conference, whilst stressing the difficulties which, through no fault of ours, have arisen from the French Treaties of Alliance, yet to refrain from ourselves proposing concrete solutions of this problem. We might also stress, at least during the first stage of the discussions, that this problem is linked with the future shaping of the League of Nations and that we must wait and see how efforts for this reform develop. It would do us no harm if the convening of the Conference were in this way to be further postponed.

### III. *The Assumption of Obligations to Render Military Assistance by Individual Parties to the Western Pact.*

The old Rhine Pact was so constructed that it contained a purely negative obligation in relations between Germany on the one side and France and Belgium on the other side, namely, the obligation of non-aggression, while Britain and Italy for their part undertook to render



military aid to the party who became the victim of aggression in the event of this non-aggression obligation being violated. There did not, therefore, derive from the Rhine Pact any obligation whatsoever upon Germany to render military aid. Nor did it impose any such obligation upon France and Belgium *vis-à-vis* Britain or Italy, or upon Britain and Italy in respect of each other.

An entirely new factor was introduced into this simple structure by the project for an air pact. For, according to the original Anglo-French proposal, the pact was envisaged as containing promises of mutual assistance by all five of the Locarno Powers to cover the event of one of the parties being suddenly attacked by the air force of another party.<sup>12</sup> Were the project to be put into effect in this form, the result would be that the old Rhine Pact would be replaced by a regular pact of mutual assistance between all Five Powers. Germany would therefore, for instance, be undertaking to render military aid with her air force to Britain, in the event of an Italian, and to Italy in the event of a British attack. The same would apply to France *vis-à-vis* Italy and Britain.

As soon as the project became the subject of diplomatic discussions, it very quickly became apparent that when it had originally been put forward the extent of its practical application had by no means been clear. Thus, from the British side came a series of observations to the effect that Britain, whilst attaching importance to becoming in future not only a guarantor of Germany, France and Belgium, but also to being herself guaranteed at least in the air, did not consider a guarantee relationship desirable *vis-à-vis* Italy.<sup>13</sup> Belgium for her part has frequently made it known that she is not disposed to have her obligations, as laid down in the old Rhine Pact, extended; indeed, she would like to be released altogether from obligations to render aid, that is to say, also the obligation to assist France against Germany, and only to be the beneficiary of guarantee obligations undertaken by the other four Powers. As for Italy, it may be assumed that she will not be much inclined to undertake assistance obligations in Britain's favour.

We ourselves are therefore now confronted with the important question of whether we, for our part too, are in fact prepared to declare ourselves willing in general to undertake an obligation to render assistance to the four other Powers with our air force. This would mean in particular that in an Anglo-Italian war we could in no case remain neutral, but would have to take sides with one or other of these

<sup>12</sup> Typewritten marginal note on the copy cited in footnote 10 above: "N.B.—The following statements [i.e., in the document here printed] are partly superseded by the British Note of Sept. 17, as Britain wants a guarantee in her favour only in relation to Germany and France and not in her relations with Italy."

<sup>13</sup> Typewritten marginal note on the copy cited in footnote 10 above: "Confirmed by the new British Note [see document No. 546, enclosure]."



two countries. At the same time it is clear that military intervention of this kind would not only involve the air force, since action by our air force against another country would naturally entail a state of general war with that country.

It is not evident what could induce Germany to restrict her political freedom of action so extensively in advance. We did indeed at first accept the original air pact project without any express reservations. Our proposal in our Memorandum of March 7, 1936,<sup>8</sup> was, as has already been remarked, worded to the effect that we are prepared, in order to strengthen further the security agreements between the Western Powers, to conclude an air pact calculated to prevent automatically and effectively, the danger of sudden air attacks. This also accords with the wording of our Peace Plan of March 31, 1936.<sup>9</sup> These formulas would, however, in view of the whole context in which they occur, permit of the interpretation that we, for our part, have only been thinking in terms of a guarantee in favour of Belgium. A similar interpretation would then have to be placed upon the special addition in Point 12 of our Peace Plan, which says that, should special obligations to render military assistance arise as a result of the security agreements in the West, Germany, for her part, would be willing to assume such obligations also.

If when stipulating their obligations under the new Western Pact, Britain, France and Italy go further and also wish to undertake obligations to render military assistance to each other on a direct [bilateral] basis, this will not affect us directly. But it should be borne in mind that for France to assume obligations of military assistance in favour of Britain or of Italy would alter the general political effect of the Pact to our disadvantage. For if Britain or Italy enter with France into relations of reciprocal assistance, but with Germany only into relations stipulating unilateral assistance to us, this might naturally easily lead to a general political *rapprochement* between these countries.

Should the Reich Government, however, decide for their part too to enter into a mutual aid relationship with all parties to the Western Pact, then we should have to insist that the Pact was not supplemented, as France has so far been trying to bring about, by special bilateral agreements between individual parties such as would destroy the balance of the Pact.

## No. 516

7864/E570068-70

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister<sup>1</sup>*

LEINFELDEN, August 24, 1936.

On the afternoon of August 22 the Regent of the Kingdom of Hungary, M. de Horthy, who is staying at Salzburg,<sup>2</sup> paid an unofficial visit to the Chancellor at the Obersalzberg. The Führer had desired that the Reich War Minister and I be present. M. de Horthy was welcomed at the frontier by Obergruppenführer Brückner on behalf of the Führer and taken in the Führer's own car in pouring rain to the Obersalzberg.

The Führer and M. de Horthy first conversed alone for some time and then together with the Reich War Minister and myself. The private conversation was, as the Führer told me afterwards, of a general character; the Führer gave M. de Horthy his views on the European situation as a whole and on the danger of the events in Spain, emphasizing that in his opinion a conflict between the countries ruled by Bolshevik and those ruled by authoritarian-bourgeois Governments could not be avoided. It was therefore necessary for all these countries to unite, a point of view with which M. de Horthy warmly agreed. During the discussion between the four of us, which covered the most varied topics, not only of a political nature, the Regent also expressed his desire to help overcome any still remaining tension between Mussolini and the Führer. M. de Horthy informed us that he would be meeting Mussolini during the autumn and on this occasion would like to take the opportunity of restoring complete confidence between Mussolini and the Führer. The Führer replied that we were already working together most closely once again and that he believed that this collaboration between Italy and Germany would in the nature of things become even closer in the future.

Amongst other things M. de Horthy spoke about the impressions he had gained in Austria and asked that we should have patience with developments in Austria; in any case they would, in his opinion, inevitably lead eventually to *Anschluss* with Germany as soon as the older generation, which still had many mental inhibitions to overcome, had died out. Amongst the youth of Austria he had observed an almost unanimous will for *Anschluss* with Germany. He was convinced that this youth would get its way. The Führer replied that he had no intention of exerting any pressure whatsoever on developments in

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note at the head of this document. "Obediently submitted to Minister Freiherr v. Weizsäcker. The Foreign Minister begs that the Embassy in Budapest be informed." Weizsäcker sent Mackensen a copy in a letter of Aug. 25 (7864/E570067).

<sup>2</sup> On Aug. 20-30 Horthy was on a hunting trip at the invitation of the Austrian Government; he had a meeting with Schuschnigg in Vienna on Aug. 21.

Austria. At the present time we ourselves would indeed be caused the greatest difficulties internationally by a too rapid development in the direction of the *Anschluss* of Austria. What we aspired to do was merely to bring the cultural and economic links between the two countries back to normal again and to give the Austrian people themselves the opportunity of shaping their relations as seemed best to them.

Concerning Hungary's relations with Czechoslovakia and Rumania, M. de Horthy spoke very pessimistically, but he voiced the hope that the way towards an understanding between Hungary and Yugoslavia might gradually be prepared. Preparatory work for such an understanding had already been done by King Alexander himself before his death.<sup>3</sup> Unfortunately, as a result of his assassination and the ensuing agitation against Hungary, the ground that had already been gained had been lost again. However, both Horthy and his Ministers were convinced that the broken threads should be joined once more, and he was able to say that this was already being done with some success.<sup>4</sup> Of course this delicate matter, too, required time and must be anticipated by psychological preparation in Hungary, where they were particularly sensitive owing to the injustices of the Peace Treaty.

Both the Regent and the Führer appeared to be most satisfied with the course taken by the visit and the conversation. The Führer also invited the Regent, at my suggestion, to attend the German naval manoeuvres some time; this the Regent accepted with particular pleasure.

The visit lasted about three and a half hours.

FRHR. VON NEURATH

<sup>3</sup> King Alexander of Yugoslavia was assassinated in Marseilles on Oct. 9, 1934; see vol. III of this series, *passim*.

<sup>4</sup> See also documents Nos. 49 and 171. In despatch A 215 P 37 of Aug. 26 (7282/E533946-48) Mackensen reported that Stojadinović seemed to be in favour of a gradual improvement of relations with Hungary. He enclosed a cutting from the Hungarian Catholic paper *Nemzeti Újság* on an interview granted their correspondent by an important member of the Foreign Ministry in Belgrade, who had spoken in the same sense.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On August 24, 1936, Hitler signed a decree extending the period of compulsory military service in Germany from one to two years. For the text see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. I, p. 706. A commentary, issued at the same time by the official *National Socialist Party Correspondence* [NSK] (quoted in *The Times* of August 25, 1936), stated that the measure was taken "in face of Soviet imperialism and its militaristic threat . . . in order to guarantee the freedom and independence of the nation in all circumstances."

Earlier on the same day it was announced that the German Government had decided to put into immediate effect an embargo on the export of war material to Spain. See also vol. III of Series D, documents Nos. 45 and 54.]



## No. 517

6976/521047-50

*Circular of the Acting State Secretary<sup>1</sup>*

Telegram

THIS VERY DAY

BERLIN, August 25, 1936.  
e.o. Pol. I 1741 I.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor von Schmieden.

The introduction of the two years' period of military service, which was announced on August 24,<sup>2</sup> [had already been contemplated for some while. That it was decided upon]<sup>3</sup> at the present moment was the result of Russian measures, the most important of which was the lowering of the call-up age to 19, announced on August 10,<sup>4</sup> which means an increase in the active strength of the Red Army by almost half, to two million men. There is, however, no occasion to see anything extraordinary<sup>5</sup> in our measure and still less to seek any far-reaching political aims behind it. Rather were we compelled by circumstances to take a step which, by continuing the assimilation of our armaments to the level of armaments of our neighbours, is designed to contribute to the further safeguarding of the peace of Europe, which can be based only on an equilibrium of forces, as is stated in the announcement of August 24 by the *National Socialist Party Correspondence* [NSK].

It will be recalled that a two-year period of military service already obtained, for technical reasons, in the German and other pre-war armies. As a natural reaction against war time, the length of active service with the colours was at first reduced in nearly all the countries which had taken part in the war. It very soon came to be realized, however, that, if only from the point of view of training, a period of service of one year or less could not suffice, at least for certain weapons. The period of service was therefore increased step by step in various countries. The following regulations at present obtain in the principal countries concerned: Russia, 2 years; Czechoslovakia, since December 1934, 2 years; France, since March 1935, 2 years; Poland, in law, 2 years, but in practice 18 months for infantry and 2 years 1 month for

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were all German Missions and the Consulate General at Geneva (6976/521051-57).

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 926.

<sup>3</sup> The passage here printed in square brackets, which has been revised in Dieckhoff's handwriting, originally read: "... had been decided on some considerable time ago, but its implementation had been planned for a later date. Its announcement..."

<sup>4</sup> For the text of the Decree of the Central Executive Committee and of the Council of People's Commissars of the USSR, lowering the age of military call-up from 21 to 19 years, see R.I.I.A.: *Documents on International Affairs, 1936*, pp. 289-290.

<sup>5</sup> This passage, which has been revised in Weizsäcker's handwriting, originally read: "Although the measure has now been taken earlier, there is no reason to scent anything extraordinary in it..."



cavalry and horse-artillery; Belgium, varying with the quota laid down yearly, up to 14 months; Italy, 18 months; Japan, 2 years for infantry, 3 years for other weapons.

In March 1935,<sup>6</sup> France gave as her grounds for extending the period of conscription the fact of the paucity of recruits in the classes born during the war, and also considerations of training. Both motives play a part in the German measure as well. The soldier of today, who is to an ever-increasing extent thrown upon his own resources in battle and compelled to take independent action, requires long and thorough training. Furthermore, the increasingly technical character of armies is making demands in the technical sphere on the majority of soldiers such as can likewise only be acquired during a period of service of some length. We did not want to adopt the method, chosen by many armies, of making the period of service of varying length according to the weapon and its demands (cf. Poland and Japan) since it does not appear to us to be desirable for technical reasons and it would also have produced an undesirable inequity.<sup>7</sup>

You should make use of the above information in conversations, always placing special emphasis on the fact that it is above all<sup>8</sup> the Russian armaments, increasing as they have been for years, which compel us to take appropriate measures for the sake of our own and Europe's security. [You should, in addition, point out that we began by introducing a one year's period of service in the hope that neighbouring countries would proceed in similar fashion. Only after it became clearly apparent that neighbouring countries were not only insisting upon a two years' period but were strengthening their armed forces beyond this, did we decide to introduce the two year period of service.]<sup>9</sup>

For your confidential information: the two years' period of service for the German Army does not mean, as a section of the foreign press is asserting, an automatic doubling of the strength of the German Army as from October; on the contrary, already this year some of the long-service men will be released; the new intake will be smaller than the figure for the previous year, owing to the above-mentioned paucity of recruits in the new age-class and the more stringent requirements with

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<sup>6</sup> In a statement made by Minister President Flandin on Mar. 15, 1935, during the debate on the bill temporarily extending the period of military service in France; the bill was passed by the Chamber on the same day. See also vol. III of this Series, document No. 532.

<sup>7</sup> At this point the following paragraph was deleted by Dieckhoff: "The extension of military service does not result in an expansion of the German army as a whole; on the contrary, the figure of 12 army corps and 36 divisions, stated in March 1935 to be the ultimate aim of the German organisation, remains as before."

<sup>8</sup> At this point the word "only" has been deleted and the words "above all" inserted.

<sup>9</sup> The passage here printed in square brackets has been inserted in Dieckhoff's handwriting.

regard to fitness.<sup>10</sup> It is, however, not desirable that information about this, or any exact numerical calculations, should become known.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>10</sup> Telegram No. 209 of Sept. 3, 1936 (5759/E419312) from Weizsäcker to the Embassy in Great Britain read as follows: "The Military Attachés accredited here, when being orally informed at the Reich War Ministry, had their attention drawn to the fact that the introduction of the two years' military service does not result in an expansion of the army. On the contrary, the figure of 12 army corps and 36 divisions, stated in March 1935 to be the ultimate aim of the German Defence organisation, remains as before. The effect of the extension of military service will therefore not be quantitative; it will, however, be qualitative." See also footnote 7 above.

## No. 518

631/252207-10

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P V 21/8.36.

WARSAW, August 25, 1936.

Received August 26.

Pol. V 3009.

Subject: General Gamelin's visit to Poland.<sup>1</sup>

The Inspector General of the Polish Army, General Rydz-Smigly, who, as long ago as the autumn of last year, had made known his desire for closer cooperation with the French military authorities by sending his confidant General Brodnowski to attend the French manoeuvres, had been planning a visit to France since the beginning of the year. Meanwhile the plan had been repeatedly postponed, which may well be attributable to a certain hesitancy induced by considerations of protocol and foreign policy and connected with the prominent political position of the Inspector General as "the second man in the State". That General Gamelin, therefore, should have decided to come to Warsaw first, was a friendly gesture which has been received here with great satisfaction, the more so since as a result of General Gamelin's initial visit the above-mentioned hesitancy has disappeared. The growing military strength of Germany has brought into prominence, especially in the Polish Army, a desire for a closer shaping of the Polish-French Alliance and for accelerated rearmament and modernization of the armed forces. It is, furthermore, hoped here that the revival of relations with France will lead to the investment of French capital in Poland and thus not only to a rise in the standard of living of the people but also to a strengthening of the military potential. Moreover, the leaders of the Polish Army may well have been urgently concerned to

<sup>1</sup> General Gamelin visited Warsaw and Cracow Aug. 12-17, 1936; see also document No. 506, and footnote 3 thereto.

obtain more detailed information about the armaments of the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, who are France's allies.

General Gamelin was very warmly received in Poland. The military character of the visit, a detailed account of which is given in the enclosure,<sup>2</sup> was strongly emphasized. Thus, for example, Foreign Minister Beck was not present at the reception at Inspector General Rydz-Smigly's, and the number of persons invited to the dinner given by him was kept as small as possible. The Diplomatic Corps was not invited to attend the functions.

Profound silence has been maintained here about the contents of the talks. Technical talks with the General Staff and visits to military installations and to armaments factories have undoubtedly been the central element of the visit, with the question of modernizing the Polish Army probably playing the largest part in it. I hear that General Gamelin detected grave deficiencies in the technical equipment of the army. In connexion with this, the Poles expressed a desire for armaments credits, but according to my information they did so with reserve.

Assurances are being given both by the Foreign Ministry and by the French Embassy here that the conversations dealt exclusively with military questions. There can, however, be no doubt that political subjects were discussed as well. It has not yet been possible to learn how far General Gamelin went in this respect, nor, in particular, whether he made concrete proposals with the aim of bringing the Polish-French military alliance into harmony with the Franco-Soviet Russian-Czech system of alliances. But at any rate General Gamelin was, as I hear from a well-informed quarter, at pains to counteract Polish distrust of the Soviet Union and of Czechoslovakia, and he seems to have begun by concentrating his efforts on a *rapprochement* between Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Poles, on the other hand, are said to have expressed grave concern about military cooperation between Soviet Russia and Czechoslovakia, especially in view of the construction of Russian aircraft bases in Czechoslovakia. Furthermore, according to my information, the growth of the Communist danger throughout the world, and especially in Poland, formed the subject of a frank conversation in which the Poles took the view that for this reason, too, closer cooperation with Russia was impossible for Poland. The thesis already propounded by Marshal Pilsudski may well have been again repeated by the Poles, namely, that Soviet Russia, because of her unclarified domestic political situation, was not a fit partner for an alliance. I also hear that Gamelin warned Poland against being taken in tow by the Fascist States, and in particular against being unduly influenced by the "dynamic of Hitlerism". He

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (631/252211-14).



is also said to have pointed insistently to the dangers allegedly threatening Poland from Danzig and also to the possibility of Germany's return to a Rapallo<sup>3</sup> policy.

According to the information so far available, it seems certain that the talks led to no concrete results, but were of an informatory character. They will be continued during the impending visit [to France] by Inspector General Rydz-Smigly. Members of the French Embassy here assume that this visit will not produce any decisions either, but that such decisions will be taken only when the results of the Five-Power talks are available.

SCHLIEP

<sup>3</sup> i.e. the policy of German-Soviet *rapprochement* which was marked by the signature of the Treaty of Rapallo on April 16, 1922.

## No. 519

753/269593-94

*Minister Podewils to Counsellor Rintelen*

CONFIDENTIAL

LUXEMBURG, August 26, 1936.

Pol. II 1641.

DEAR HERR VON RINTELEN: Yesterday the Right-wing Deputy for the *département* of Meurthe-et-Moselle, Pierre Amidieu du Clos,<sup>1</sup> "Ingénieur des Arts et Manufactures, Maître de Forges, Conseiller du Commerce Extérieur de la France, Conseiller Général", Mayor of Longwy, and ex-serviceman, called on me; he was introduced by Baron Jacquinot<sup>2</sup> of Luxemburg, who is known to you.

He painted the internal situation in France in the darkest colours, characterized it as hopeless and told me, amongst other things, that if a plebiscite were held in Alsace-Lorraine today on the question of reunion with Germany, at least 90 per cent of the population, who were in a wretched frame of mind regarding developments in France, would vote in its favour.

M. Monzelle, a parliamentarian from Alsace [*sic*],<sup>3</sup> had recently had a very sharp argument with a member of the French Government, whom he had told that France's dilemma today was: Either for Stalin or for Hitler. Today any patriotically-minded Frenchman could, in du Clos' opinion, only cast his vote in favour of the latter, because the present French Government was rushing irremediably into chaos.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Amidieu du Clos is a Right-wing deputy, aged 55. R[intelen], Aug. 31."

<sup>2</sup> Baron Auguste Jacquinot, publicist and member of the board of the Luxemburg branch of the Allgemeine Elektrizitätsgesellschaft.

<sup>3</sup> Evidently Edouard Moncelle, Député for the Moselle *département*.



Du Clos spoke in the highest terms of present-day Germany and said that France's salvation could only be brought about by Hitler. All efforts made in this direction would be backed by a large section of the French people.

I felt it incumbent upon me to inform you of this conversation.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

PODEWILS

## No. 520

7294/E534355-59

### *Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop*

*Minute for the Führer*

WILDUNGEN, August 28, 1936.

Subject: The Colonial Problem.

1) For about two years my Bureau has been working on the colonial problem, first at the instance of the Führer's Deputy and later in accordance with instructions from the Führer himself; this has been done under the aspect both of the foreign policy question of recovering the colonies (work carried out principally in Britain, and also in concert with the Foreign Ministry and the Auslandsorganisation) and of preparation at home for a colonial movement (the latter in liaison with the Colonial Policy Office).

2) To the credit side of the colonial work in Britain, which has not been easy, may nonetheless be reckoned the fact that important British politicians, as well as the British Government in general, are taking a more objective view of German colonial aspirations. In addition, there has arisen at our instigation a group of British Members of Parliament who adopt a more positive attitude towards the return of the German colonies and who are in future to paralyse opposition in the House of Commons to the return of the German colonies.

A further achievement is the fact that an influential section of the British press has declared itself willing to deal with the return of the German colonies in a positive sense the moment we give the sign.

As a further result of the work carried out abroad in cooperation with the Auslandsorganisation we can record the establishment of orderly relations in the mandated territories, so that no further damage of any importance in the field of foreign policy has occurred here as a result of these questions.

3) As regards work at home, it was first necessary to dissolve the strongly reactionary Reich Colonial Society. I reported on this to the Führer at the time and proposed that a new Reich Colonial League

should be founded and should be presided over by General von Epp<sup>1</sup> as the Party's expert on colonial problems. At that time the Führer, after several discussions, expressed his approval of this. On the Führer's instructions I brought about the dissolution of the old Reich Colonial Society, at the same time founding the new Reich Colonial League, over which I asked General von Epp to preside.<sup>1</sup>

As a result of my absence from Berlin during the negotiations in London in March and April,<sup>2</sup> the statutes of the Reich Colonial League were, without my knowledge and in consequence of an oversight by one of my colleagues, drafted in such a way that in future General von Epp would have been able to direct the Reich Colonial League entirely independently and single-handedly and that no provision was made for my Bureau to have a voice in the activities of this Reich Colonial League. At the same time it could be observed that, immediately after the foundation of the Colonial League, General von Epp and his personnel (i.e., the Colonial Policy Office) now interpreted the statutory independence within the Reich Colonial League which had been erroneously conferred upon them in such a way that they suddenly proceeded entirely independently in all questions of colonial policy, in regard both to the development of the Reich Colonial League and to other colonial questions.

I drew General von Epp's attention to these abuses and asked that the statutes be altered. Not only did General von Epp refuse to do this, but he and his people now assert that the Bureau Ribbentrop has no say in respect of Reich Colonial League questions.

That is how matters stand at present.

4) The point of view of General von Epp and the Colonial Policy Office is in my opinion unacceptable on grounds of foreign policy, since the recovery of the colonies is solely a question of foreign policy, and thus the colonial movement in Germany too must be primarily a tool, to be used very carefully, for gaining this objective in foreign policy. It is to this end alone that I have for a whole year been making efforts for the foundation of a united Colonial League. Many abuses which had arisen from the rivalries within the various leagues, to the detriment of our colonial policy, were removed during this period.

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<sup>1</sup> Gen. Franz Xaver, Ritter von Epp, Reichsstatthalter of Bavaria and Director of the Colonial Policy Office [*Kolonialpolitisches Amt*] of the NSDAP, was appointed, in mid-June, 1936, President of the newly formed Reich Colonial League. Cf. vol. III of this Series, document No. 544.

<sup>2</sup> Ribbentrop was in London, with brief interruptions, Mar. 18-Apr. 9, 1936.

5) Therefore, in the interests of a uniform treatment of the foreign policy aspects of the colonial problem by my office, it is essential that my Bureau be guaranteed a voice in the constitution and powers of the Reich Colonial League as well. This, again, can only be done, in my opinion, by clearly embodying my authority in the statutes of the Reich Colonial League. Apart from this it must also be observed with regard to these statutes that the question of appointing the President of this Reich Colonial League also needs special clarification. According to the present statutes, the Director of the Colonial Policy Office [of the NSDAP] appoints this President, which I, for a great variety of reasons, do not consider right.

6) I should be grateful if I might report to the Führer in the near future on the colonial question, perhaps in the presence of Reich Minister Hess, in order that a fundamental clarification of this increasingly important question, may be brought about. The Führer's Deputy, who also wishes to speak to the Führer during the next few days about the colonial problem, has been kept currently informed by me about the whole matter. It has been agreed with him that he, for his part, will not make any decisions in respect of the Party either until a joint report has been made to the Führer.

7) In order that no undesirable incidents or repercussions affecting foreign policy should occur before the final decision, I have agreed with the Führer's Deputy that he shall instruct the head of the Colonial Policy Office, General von Epp, to forbid any kind of activity by the Reich Colonial League, as at present constituted, pending this final clarification.

As a fresh and typical example of the fact that the members of the Colonial Policy Office are not in a position to appreciate the significance in relation to foreign policy of statements made in the sphere of colonial policy, I enclose an extract,<sup>3</sup> which I received today, from the preface by Herr Ritter of the Colonial Policy Office, to a book, *Unforgotten Land*, [? published] by Dr. Hermann. The printing of this passage was prohibited by my collaborators in the work on colonial policy, although, as I was told, Ritter had expressly warned the publisher, Hermann, to submit the preface to my office for scrutiny, as has hitherto always been done in the case of publications on colonial policy. I regard the tone and form of this preface, which would undoubtedly be viewed abroad as an official utterance by the NSDAP since it is written by a member of the Colonial Policy Office, as ill-suited to advance our views on colonial questions abroad.

That the members of the Colonial Policy Office are lacking in judgement with regard to the political treatment of colonial matters in other respects too, is proved by many other similar cases that have come to

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7294/E534360-62).

my attention. I therefore consider it important that this colonial work should be subjected to supervision from the foreign policy aspect in order to avoid repercussions on foreign policy, especially in the coming period when the return of our former colonies may perhaps enter an acute stage.

R[IBBENTROP]

A carbon copy of this note and of the preface has also been sent to Reich Minister Hess.

## No. 521

3245/E000074

### *Note by Ambassador Ribbentrop*

*Minute for the Führer*

WILDUNGEN, August 28, 1936.

Subject: Lord Lloyd.<sup>1</sup>

Lord Lloyd, who belongs to the group of die-hards, thus, to the Churchill group, is to attend the Party Rally at Nuremberg. The Führer will recall that he received Lord Lloyd in 1933 in Berlin.<sup>2</sup> Since his visit to Berlin at that time, Lord Lloyd has never again made any public utterance of any kind against Germany. He is an absolute exponent of British Imperialism, and I will try, through him, to effect a breach in the hostile front of the Right-wing Conservatives.<sup>3</sup>

R[IBBENTROP]

<sup>1</sup> George Ambrose Lloyd, 1st Baron Lloyd of Dolobran, High Commissioner for Egypt and the Sudan, 1925-1929.

<sup>2</sup> No record of this interview has been found.

<sup>3</sup> No other material on this subject has been found.

## No. 522

6982/E521808

### *The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 233 of August 31

WASHINGTON, August 31, 1936—1:53 a.m.

Received September 1—6:25 a.m.

Pol. I 1871.

Upon Hull's return from leave, I took the opportunity today of also informing him personally and in detail (on the basis of your telegram No. 152<sup>1</sup>) of our measure for a two-year period of military service.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 517, which was sent to Washington under this number.



Outwardly Hull showed himself very ready to understand and raised no objections at all to my explanations as such. He maintained, however, that the totality of rearmament measures were increasing the danger of a major armed conflict. Upon my remarking that before the war the balance of armaments in Europe, including a strongly armed Germany, had for a long while constituted a guarantee of world peace, he replied that conditions had now changed in as much as the rapid progress in technology might also occasion the acceleration of political and warlike developments. That such developments in Europe would inevitably mean the end of Western civilisation, on which America's welfare was very largely dependent, was the reason for the tremendous interest America had in the preservation of European peace. He mentioned further that the constantly mounting expenditure on armaments by the European nations threatened to bring about an economic collapse, the devastating effects of which the world over would only be surpassed by war itself. In reply I particularly emphasized that Germany, who had consistently declared herself willing to agree to a limitation of armaments on the basis of equal treatment for all, had indeed, for her part, by introducing a one-year period of military service, tried to get the one-year period generally adopted.

LUTHER

## No. 523

7253/E532188-201

### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

BERLIN, August 31, 1936.

Sent September 9.

e.o. W III SE 2804.

Subject: An Italo-German understanding on economic policy in the Danubian region.

With reference to your report No. 3435 of July 17, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

I. The policy, which the German Government have for many years pursued, of strengthening Germany's position in the Danubian region by means of a closer economic interconnexion between the States of South Eastern Europe and Germany, has not been without a measure of success. Germany's share in the foreign trade of these States has increased everywhere. In general, it amounts to about 25 per cent of the foreign trade of the countries in question. In some cases it is greater still. In the case of Bulgaria, where the German share already amounts to over 60 per cent, the maximum attainable has probably

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 457.

already been reached. This development has not only been of advantage to the German economy in connexion with exports and the intake of raw materials and foodstuffs. It has, in addition (and this is of importance in the context to be dealt with here), promoted a political *rapprochement* in the case of the States concerned, or has at least contributed towards the elimination of existing tensions. This even applies to a certain extent to Rumania. Czechoslovakia alone still retains a special position in this respect. \*

We are well aware that the further conduct of this policy would be facilitated, should it prove possible to arrive at a basic understanding with Italy concerning German and Italian economic interests in the Danubian region and to draw up the principles of a common policy. We should therefore welcome it if the conversations already begun between you and Signor Bastianini on these matters were to be continued and to lead to concrete results.

In our opinion, too, the present moment is propitious for such discussion, since political relations in general between Germany and Italy at present provide a favourable basis, and since, in particular, the German-Austrian agreement of July 11<sup>2</sup> has eliminated one obstacle that stood in the way. On the other hand it is important, precisely after the conclusion of the German-Austrian agreement (which opens up new possibilities for German policy not only in Austria but also throughout the whole of the South East), to set about exploiting these new possibilities in agreement with Italy.

II. The experiences of the last few years have shown that practical work for improved economic organization of the Danubian region and for the economic advancement of the participating States cannot be done by means of collective treaties. The German Government have therefore sought to achieve, by means of bilateral treaties, the same ends which other Powers have striven in the past, and are, indeed, still striving to reach by means of collective treaties. The most important stages are the Commercial Treaty of June 24, 1932, with Bulgaria,<sup>3</sup> the agreement of February 21, 1934, with Hungary,<sup>4</sup> the Commercial Treaty of May 1, 1934, with Yugoslavia<sup>5</sup> and the Commercial Treaty of March 23, 1935,<sup>6</sup> with Rumania. As this policy of bilateral treaties has proved its worth, we intend to continue to pursue it. Nor should we be averse, in certain circumstances, to concluding, at a date the determining of which will be dependent upon further developments in

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755.

<sup>3</sup> See *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1933, pt. II, pp. 60-73.

<sup>4</sup> See vol II of this Series, document No. 322 and footnotes thereto.

<sup>5</sup> See vol. II of this Series, document No. 318, and vol. III, document No. 23.

<sup>6</sup> See vol III of this Series, document No. 551.

political relations with Austria, an open preference treaty with Austria. Then later on, perhaps, the transformation, wholly or in part, of the secret privileges accorded to Hungary and Yugoslavia into open preferences might be considered. As a further stage there could then follow, perhaps, the conclusion of an open preference treaty with Rumania too, provided, that is, that Rumanian policy, in its general attitude towards Germany and towards the Russo-French Treaty, created the necessary preconditions. In this connexion, I would mention that even within Rumania herself more and more voices have recently been raised in favour of a departure from the policy hitherto pursued by M. Titulescu, as more and more people are coming to realize the extent of Rumania's economic dependence on Germany and the impossibility of finding amongst her political friends a substitute for the German market.

III. The question is in what way an understanding could be brought about with Italy concerning the implementation of the German programme outlined in general terms above? We must proceed from the premise that in *practice* no precise delimitation based on considerations of geography or areas of economic activity is possible. A division into "geographical spheres of influence" would probably fail if only because agreement with Italy over Austria and Hungary would not be possible. Presumably, too, the States concerned would themselves feel that they were too much pawns in a political game and would resist. It is true that the previous objections of an internal economic nature (our despatch W.8708 of January 5, 1933),<sup>7</sup> against the demarcation of spheres of economic activity, under which certain States would be the preserve of certain branches of German and Italian industry, now no longer obtain to the full extent. Nevertheless, such a division is still not feasible for other reasons. It would make it more difficult for us to achieve a uniformly close economic relationship in the long run with all the agrarian States of South Eastern Europe, including Hungary. It would also probably meet with resistance from the States in question themselves because they would feel themselves too much at the mercy of the industry of the one or the other country.

Even so, previous international negotiations and above all the Stresa conference,<sup>8</sup> provide starting points for the form in which agreement with Italy could once again be sought. In this connexion recourse might well be had to the Italian Danube Memorandum of September 29, 1933,<sup>9</sup> and to the provisionally agreed points [*Punk-*

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<sup>7</sup> Not printed (7680/E547644-49). For a summary of this report see vol. I of this Series, document No. 14, footnote 1.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 129, footnote 6.

<sup>9</sup> This memorandum was communicated to the signatories of the Four Power Pact and to other interested States. See vol. I of this Series, document No. 485 and footnote 5 thereto.



tationen] set forth in the Embassy's report I 1267 of August 3, 1933,<sup>10</sup> which for political reasons could not be followed up at the time.

IV. In these circumstances your conversations with Signor Bastiani might be continued with the Italian Government somewhat on the following lines: Germany has always recognized that, in economic terms, Italy's position as regards the Danubian region is similar to that of Germany. Italy is the only European Great Power, with the exception of Germany, who can base her claim to collaborate in the economic shaping of the Danubian region upon substantial economic interests and potentialities. (Compare, for example, the article in the *Deutscher Volkswirt*, "Economics and Politics in the Danubian Region", forwarded with our despatch II Oe. 391 of February 6, 1936.<sup>11</sup> The attention of the Italian Embassy here was drawn to this article at the time. It came, as could be stated on this occasion, from the pen of an official of the Foreign Ministry.)

The German Government adhere to the standpoint that the economic development of the Danubian States can best be accomplished along the lines envisaged at Stresa. They are, accordingly, prepared in principle to agree to unilateral preferences in favour of the agrarian exports of the South Eastern States, and to agrarian and industrial preferences in favour of Austria. As the conclusion of collective treaties has always encountered difficulties, the German Government believe that this goal can most easily be reached by means of bilateral treaties between the State which receives, and the State which grants, preferences. It is a precondition that such bilateral preference treaties shall be recognized by all States in their economic policies. The Stresa agreements afford the general principle for this. If Germany and Italy were to act in concert, then any possible resistance on the part of individual States would probably not have to be taken seriously. For the German Government it would of course be a precondition in each separate case that the treaties in question should be economic in character and should in no way be politically directed against any third State, and that Germany should be asked for her approval before any such treaty was concluded.

Because these preconditions were not met in the case of the Austro-Czechoslovak preference treaty, we did not, as the Italian Government were informed<sup>12</sup> at the time, approve this treaty. (In this connexion, you could mention that we had learned with satisfaction that Italy, too, had objected to the Austro-Czechoslovak treaty—provided that the manner in which you received this information, reported in your

<sup>10</sup> See vol. I of this Series, document No. 388.

<sup>11</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 543.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 129.



despatch No. 3848 of August 13, 1936,<sup>13</sup> permits you to do so. If necessary it could be added here that this example shows that we have already previously attached value to cooperation with Italy. Indeed we might have been entitled to expect the Italian Government likewise to inform us of their attitude towards the Czecho-Austrian preference treaty.)

We further proceed upon the assumption that treaties of this kind will not represent a bridge leading towards the formation of political blocs against us. The development of commercial relations between the States of the Little Entente, for example, is therefore being watched by us with particular attention. For the same reason we have refused to engage in economic discussions with groupings of States, such as the Little Entente as an entity, or to approve any agreement between such groups of States. Our attitude towards the Rome Protocol[s]<sup>14</sup>, which we reaffirmed only recently, on the occasion of the agreement of July 11 with Austria,<sup>2</sup> remains unaffected.

Should the Italian Government share our view on the future treatment of these questions, we would be prepared to enter into conversations with a view to ensuring that neither of our two States should initiate negotiations with any State in the Danubian region for the conclusion of a preference treaty, without previously consulting the other State. Before such a treaty was concluded, the approval of the other State would have to be obtained. Furthermore, Germany and Italy would have to afford each other mutual support in obtaining the agreement of third States. The contents of an agreement of this nature would correspond, in essentials, to Point 11 of the Italian Memorandum of September 29, 1933, referred to above. In addition, it could also be agreed, in the sense of the provisionally agreed points [*Punktationen*] likewise referred to above, that the German and Italian Governments should in any case keep each other currently informed with regard to the principles governing their commercial policies in the South East. Each should give the other previous notice of the more important steps they proposed to take, such as, for instance, the denunciation of treaties, or diplomatic interventions or counter-measures against measures of commercial policy taken by the South Eastern States.

Finally, it would also have to be expressly made clear between the two Governments that they would, in future too, combat all attempts

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<sup>13</sup> Not printed (7689/E548020-24). This despatch dealt with the Czechoslovak-Austrian negotiations which had just opened in Rome. The relevant passage read: "Czechoslovakia, who fears to be forced out of the Italian market, seems ready to make substantial concessions despite a certain resentment that prevails on the Czechoslovak side because Italy, like Germany, raised objections to the recently concluded Austro-Czechoslovak preferences agreement."

<sup>14</sup> See document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

to set up, without the simultaneous participation of both Germany and Italy, any new economic organizations, e.g., on the lines of the plan which keeps cropping up, for an economic fusion of the Little Entente, or the Tardieu plan.<sup>15</sup>

You should say that we believe that such or similar agreements would be consonant with the policies pursued by Germany and Italy and would allow for the interests of both economies. Although both Germany and Italy already have a substantial share in the trade of the Danubian countries, there is still room for increasing this share at the expense of third parties, without the German and Italian economies harming each other. The fact, too, that German and Italian export and import interests in the South East are centred in many instances on different types of commodities, will facilitate a settlement of this nature. Moreover, Germany's and Italy's economic and geographic advantages in the countries of South-Eastern Europe, as compared with other States (with the exception of Czechoslovakia), are so great that for this reason too it may be expected that any increase in the purchasing power of the South East will primarily benefit German and Italian industry.

The practical implementation of such economic agreements could best be left in the hands of the German and Italian Government Committees. These Committees comprise on either side personalities who are particularly conversant with the economic problems of the South East.

V. The object of this despatch is to give you the instructions for which you asked on page 6 of your report No. 3435 of July 17, 1936, about the complex of questions dealt with on pages 4 to 6 of your report under reference. You will be able to perceive that our position with regard to this complex of questions, both in general and in detail, is a positive one—as, indeed, it was in the years 1933 and 1934.

Whether, on the basis of these instructions, you wish promptly to reopen your conversations with the Italian Government at the first opportunity, or whether you would first prefer to let me have your views on the above, I leave to your own choice. Any amplification or suggestion based on your long experience in Rome, will receive particular attention here. And it would certainly also be useful if we could

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<sup>15</sup> The reference is to a plan, put forward by the French representative, Tardieu, at the London Four Power Conference (Britain, France, Germany, Italy) held in April 1932. Its main proposals were that the five "Danubian" States (Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Rumania, Yugoslavia) should grant each other reciprocal customs preferences, that certain other countries, including Germany and Italy, should grant the Danubian States preferential entry for agricultural produce, and the raising of a loan to be devoted, under international supervision, to stabilizing the financial position of the Danubian States. The plan was rejected at the Conference, largely owing to Italian and German opposition. See *Survey of International Affairs*, 1932, Pt. 1, pp. 22–23; *ibid.*, 1933, pp. 205–206; *ibid.*, 1934, pp. 487–488, 493. See also vol. I of this Series, document No. 5 and footnote 3 thereto.

discuss the whole complex of questions orally with you here at the first opportunity.<sup>16</sup>

V[ON] N[EURATH]

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<sup>16</sup> In despatch No. 4248 of Sept. 10(7253/E532202) the Chargé d'Affaires in Rome reported that, in view of the personal nature of the instructions, he did not propose to take any action until the Ambassador returned from leave at the end of September.

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[EDITORS' NOTE: On August 31, 1936, there were signed in Berlin (a) a German-Polish agreement on the settlement of the arrears which had arisen up to March 25, 1936, from the railway transit traffic between East Prussia and the rest of Germany (7572/E542819-37), and (b) a German-Polish agreement on railway transit traffic for 1936 (9172/E645451-63). Documents on the negotiations leading up to these agreements, which had been provided for in the German-Polish Preliminary Agreement of April 7, 1936 (document No. 264, enclosure), have been filmed on Serials 4026, 5643, 5810 and 9172.]

## No. 524

1723/399584-85

*Attaché Seiler of the Consulate General at Danzig to Secretary of Legation  
Bergmann of Political Division V*

DANZIG, September 2, 1936.  
Pol. V 3240.

DEAR SECRETARY OF LEGATION: With reference to our telephone conversation of today,<sup>1</sup> I have the honour to transmit copies of an exchange of letters between the President of the Senate and the High Commissioner (Enclosures 1-4),<sup>2</sup> in which the President of the Senate gives notification that Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher will go to Geneva as Danzig's delegate in respect of item 25 of the agenda of the League of Nations' Council. A memorandum by Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher containing proposals for Danzig's attitude at the next session of the League Council is appended as Enclosure 5.<sup>3</sup>

Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher told me that the copy of the agenda which was received by the Senate was mimeographed and that Danzig had subsequently been inserted by typewriter as item 25 of the agenda.

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<sup>1</sup> No record of this has been found.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (1723/399586-89).

<sup>3</sup> Printed as the enclosure to the present document.



I beg to confirm once more that Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher will be in Berlin on Tuesday afternoon, September 8.

Heil Hitler,

Yours etc.,

SEILER<sup>4</sup>

1723/399590-91

[Enclosure]

\* DANZIG, September 1, 1936.

At present only the matter of the warship's visit<sup>5</sup> is on the agenda at Geneva; indeed, Poland is described as acting on behalf of the League of Nations, not as the representative of Danzig. The President of the Senate has had an enquiry from the Secretary General of the League asking whether he wishes to take part in the proceedings and whom he wishes to nominate as delegate. In view of the July experiences,<sup>6</sup> they are confining themselves prudently—for the time being—to this point.

Outwardly, we have only a platonic interest in this matter. The presence of President Greiser is neither necessary nor desirable, if only in order not to weaken the strong impression made at the July session. All the same, the incident took place on Danzig soil, and it seems desirable that I should be sent as delegate, expressly restricted to this point, and at the same time as an observer.

There is still a possibility that the question of the compatibility with the constitution of the new decrees,<sup>7</sup> and perhaps of the prohibitions on newspapers,<sup>8</sup> will also be put subsequently on the agenda. Papée has told President Greiser that the former is probable and would like President Greiser to negotiate about this with Beck in Warsaw; that is to say, that Danzig should be willing to make special concessions over something or other so that Beck can smooth the path for us in Geneva.

I do not regard negotiations with Poland on *this* question before Geneva as desirable.

If no further points are raised at Geneva, then President Greiser's assault in July will have been a great victory, the effects of which are now making themselves felt. If any such points are put on the agenda,

<sup>4</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "Immediate! Respectfully submitted via Senior Counsellor v. Lieres to Minister Dr. Woermann for his information, with special reference to Enclosure 5. Staatsrat Dr. Böttcher will call here on Tuesday afternoon, Sept. 8. B[ergmann], Sept. 4." (ii) "I should like to see Böttcher. W[oermann], Sept. 5." (iii) "B[öttcher] is notified. B[ergmann]." No record of a conversation between Woermann and Böttcher has been found.

<sup>5</sup> See documents Nos. 419, 438 and 467, footnote 2.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., the League Council's debate on Danzig on July 4; see documents Nos. 430 footnote 1, and 434.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 472, with footnotes 1 and 4.

<sup>8</sup> In his report to the League Council of Sept. 12, 1936, Lester stated that Danzig newspapers representing the Opposition parties had been suppressed for periods ranging from five months to one year (for the text of Lester's report see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, pp. 1359-1381).



then in my opinion we ought not to react at all; nor ought we to be officially represented on these points. The Council will then in any case hand over the matter either to experts or to the Hague for examination. On this, too, we will make no observations nor supply any explanations. The Council can then adopt no resolution until, at earliest, January. We can remain indifferent to this resolution also and pay no heed to it. Besides, the situation will undoubtedly be more favourable for Danzig in January than it is now.

Poland can thus remain completely excluded, particularly if Germany tells Poland that for the time being she will not touch the outward position of the High Commissioner.

The High Commissioner will thereby continue to be put completely out of action as far as our internal affairs are concerned, and the Government, if they proceed cautiously, will have a free hand *vis-à-vis* the Opposition.

It will be a different matter if it is desired to attempt wholly to remove the institution of a High Commissioner already at the present time. That would need German-Polish negotiations.

DR. BÖTTCHER

## No. 525

2431/513990-92

### *The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

#### Telegram

No. 239 September 4      WASHINGTON, September 4, 1936—12:29 p.m.

Received September 5—9:45 a.m.

Pol. IX 1065.

The speech which Hull is to make on Tuesday<sup>1</sup> at the World Power Conference, of which an extract, not as yet intended for publication, is being simultaneously sent by cable,<sup>2</sup> represents an important declaration on foreign policy. Although it mentions no State by name, its form and substance indicate, nevertheless, that it is primarily directed against the alleged political principle of the non-parliamentary European Powers. The views which Hull set forth to me some days ago (see my telegram No. 233)<sup>3</sup> reappear with greater force in the speech, in which mention is made of dangerous ambitions, of conflicting political philosophies, of war-like tendencies, of hopes of national aggrandisement and of the promulgated [*sic-erlassen*]<sup>4</sup> carrying out of

<sup>1</sup> i.e., Sept. 8; Hull's speech was in fact made on Sept. 7, in Washington.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 240 of Sept. 5 (6333/E472519-20).

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 522.

<sup>4</sup> This word was queried by the cipher bureau and was evidently garbled in transmission. The speech referred to "... the valiant patriotic youth of the world, ready to carry out the orders of the leaders who are too often reckless or ruthless".

the orders of the leaders. The danger of another World War that would be fought with poison gas and aeroplanes and would make the world a veritable inferno, is described in passionate terms as having come closer. The death of Western civilization is described as the inevitable consequence.

Almost every word is proof of the uneasiness with which the American Government are following those events in Europe which, to them, at the present moment by far overshadow the happenings in the Far East or in South America.

As is well known, no one in the United States today would think of taking part in any possible armed conflicts in Europe. As against this, it seems that the leading American Foreign Minister [*sic*] is already in the process of abandoning spiritual neutrality towards those States which are not governed on the principles of the Western Democracies. Neutrality in economic policy is formally prescribed only in respect of the export of war material. Other than that, any further prohibition depends for the time being on the Government's exhortations or on the voluntary decision of business circles. While Hull's speech can cause no surprise since his mental attitude has always been known, it should, on the other hand, not mislead anyone into the assumption that he intends to take a stand against us on all practical questions. One can, for example, assume that there is a definite wish for an understanding with us in the economic sphere, all the more readily since Hull has shown in his attitude towards other Powers that on occasion he is able to set aside fundamental political principles in the interest of economic objectives. At any rate, Hull's statements, the basic theory of which is consistent with Roosevelt's views, is fresh proof of how, today as previously, at times of tension American policy always falls most strongly under the spell of European events and how little one can rely on the probability of complete neutrality. I am reporting by telegram in the first place because it seems to me worth considering whether the forthcoming Party Rally might not afford the Führer and Chancellor the opportunity of discussing Hull's theories in a way that would find an echo here. Moreover, unless I am otherwise instructed by telegram, I shall make earnest representations to Hull to the effect that while the speech he made to a foreign audience may not have been specifically directed at certain European States, it was none the less bound to give regrettable, dangerous and, in fact, unfounded cause for such a view.

I shall also inform Herr Dorpmüller<sup>5</sup> of the substance of the speech so that, should he consider it feasible and should an opportunity be

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<sup>5</sup> Director-General of the German railways, and President of the World Power Conference.

provided by the occasion of conferring the presidency, he may perhaps be able to reply to Hull in a certain way, although I am aware of the objections to this course.<sup>6</sup>

LUTHER

<sup>6</sup> In telegram No. 165 of Sept. 7 (2431/513993) Gaus instructed Luther that as, contrary to previous occasions, the speech, as far as its text was known in Berlin, was not explicitly aimed at Germany, representations to Hull at the moment would be neither necessary nor opportune; nor did it seem desirable for Dormmüller or any other German at the Conference to reply directly to Hull's speech.

## No. 526

43/28675

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

[BERCHTESGADEN,] September 4, 1936.

The Führer and Chancellor has today received Mr. Lloyd George in his country house near Berchtesgaden. Lloyd George arrived about 4 p.m. with Ambassador v[on] Ribbentrop, and both left the house together about 7 p.m. In the course of the conversation, the general political situation in Europe was discussed. Lloyd George was particularly interested in what the Führer told him of the plans put in hand in Germany for economic reconstruction such as road building, resettlement, etc.

<sup>1</sup> This memorandum is taken from the files of the *Dienststelle Ribbentrop*, and is the only German record that has been found of Lloyd George's conversation with Hitler. The following documents on the arrangements for the visit have been found: (i) of Aug. 16, 1936 (3245/E000069-70) by Ribbentrop, entitled *Notiz für den Führer* [Minute for the Führer], which stated that Lloyd George had accepted the invitation, and described the plans he desired to follow; he had declined Ribbentrop's original plan of inviting him to the Nuremberg Party Rally: (ii) a Minute for the Führer of Aug. 28, 1936 (3245/E000076), by Ribbentrop stating that Lloyd George would be at the Grand Hotel, Berchtesgaden, on Sept. 4, 1936, with his son and daughter, Professor [*sic*] Conwell-Evans and Mr. Jones (the latter described as having been previously received by the Führer and as being an intimate friend of Baldwin), and asking whether Lloyd George could be received by Hitler on Sept. 4: (iii) a Minute to the Führer dated Aug. 31, 1936 (3245/E000077) by Ribbentrop, noting that he had invited Viscount Dawson of Penn, personal physician to the King, to join the party: (iv) a report B 2756 of Sept. 1, 1936 (1437/363552-53) from the London Embassy reporting information as to Lloyd George's plans obtained from his secretary Mr. Sylvester, and from a conversation with a person described as "one of Lloyd George's closest political colleagues", who had explained the reasons for Lloyd George's reluctance to attend the Nuremberg Party Rally. Accounts of the two meetings, one on Sept. 4 and one on Sept. 5, which took place between Lloyd George and Hitler, are given in Thomas Jones, C.H., *A Diary with Letters, 1931-1950* (London, 1954), pp. 224-252, A. J. Sylvester, *The Real Lloyd George* (London, 1947), pp. 202-214, Dr. Paul Schmidt, *Statist auf diplomatischer Bühne* (Bonn, 1949), pp. 336-340. Lloyd George's own impressions of his interview were given in a signed article in the London *Daily Express* of Sept. 17, 1936.



## No. 527

1425/362793-97

*Counsellor of Legation Bräuer to Minister Richthofen*<sup>1</sup>

BRUSSELS, September 6, 1936.

DEAR MINISTER: For your visit to Berlin I must today inform you of a matter which appears to me to be important and urgent.

Léon Degrelle, who saw Mussolini a few weeks ago<sup>2</sup> at the latter's invitation, and returned with the latter's financial and moral support which had not been requested, is trying, allegedly on the advice of Mussolini and Ciano, in the most discreet manner to get in touch with leading Germans. Ciano advised him to get in touch with Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels before paying a visit to the Führer, as he [Ciano] had, of his own accord, promised to inform Goebbels of the Italian attitude towards the Rexist movement. The suggestion for a meeting between Dr. Goebbels and Degrelle will be made to the former in the next few days. Degrelle is, however, of the opinion that the official German Mission should also pave the way for and promote his visit by a confidential statement of their views, and has addressed a request to this effect to me.

In view of your stay in Berlin and your impending return to your post, I did not wish to do this myself, but to leave the appropriate steps to you. My attitude would, with certain reservations, be favourable and would be based on the following considerations.

The decay of the old political parties in Belgium continues, with the exception of the Socialists who are radicalizing themselves, and, in spite of their participation in the Cabinet, are working to form a Popular Front. The sole elements on the Right which could check the resultant danger for Belgium, and indirectly for her neighbours also, are in fact only the Rexistists and the Flemish Nationalists. The developments of the past few weeks have caused this fact to be widely recognized in Belgium. Spain and the developments in France have contributed to this. At the same time, there is noticeable a turning away from France, which to my knowledge is without precedent in the post-war history of Belgium. France is almost everywhere regarded as being helpless against the Red onslaught and as more or less lost; she could, it is thought, only be saved with foreign help. It is therefore understandable that large sections of the community in Belgium should be

<sup>1</sup> Richthofen was on leave from Aug. 8 to Sept. 11.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 507.



looking to Germany for protection against the dangers of Bolshevization. Degrelle, who, by reason of the immense popularity which he enjoys, regards himself as his country's saviour-to-be, holds this view to a quite extraordinary degree, and is therefore—on Italian advice, even at this stage—seeking contacts, and perhaps advice and assistance, in Germany.

As regards his prospects in Belgium, the following is of importance: Degrelle has several times been received by the King and he has the support of an influential majority at Court; he has the militarily powerful and politically reliable *gendarmérie* entirely on his side, and has also won over a large part of the army; in the country he has a big following, above all among the lower middle classes and the Christian workers and he has for some time enjoyed the support of industry. He has come to an agreement with the Flemish Nationalists which assures him of their support on the basis of the monarchy, an authoritarian régime and a far-reaching separation of the administration in the two sections of the country.

Unfavourable for Degrelle are, on the one hand, the strength and unity of the Socialist party and, on the other, the belief in democracy and parliamentary government, which is deeply rooted among large circles of the bourgeoisie, and their consequent aversion to dictatorial or authoritarian experiments. Whether the bourgeoisie will succeed in saving democracy in Belgium or whether, on the contrary, their attitude will play into the hands of the parties of the Left, remains to be seen; in any case, both factors are militating *against* Degrelle.

In these circumstances our attitude, in my opinion, is obvious. It must be based on the existing conditions and must not disregard the fact that the van Zeeland Government represents Belgium. This, therefore, rules out all plans which savour of conspiracy and interference in Belgium's domestic affairs. On the other hand, we cannot be prevented from closely studying the forces which will be effective for the maintenance of order in the event of the advance of Anarcho-Communist ideas in an important neighbouring country and which, to judge by many indications, might be called upon, perhaps in the near future, to lead the country. In this connexion one must not overlook the fact that these new forces would be closer to us ideologically and politically than previous Belgian Governments, which might become important, for example, in the question of Eupen-Malmédy and in questions of major policy (colonial question).

In these circumstances I would strongly recommend that Degrelle be given the opportunity, subject to all precautionary measures being taken, for making contact with Dr. Goebbels and possibly with the Führer, whilst completely maintaining our loyalty to the present Belgian Government. The purpose of my letter is to convey to you the request that you put this forward in Berlin and further to enable

you to give the Foreign Ministry the information upon which they could then perhaps base their attitude.<sup>3</sup>

Closing salutation to be handwritten by myself.<sup>4</sup>

BRÄUER

<sup>3</sup> In despatch Pol. II 1752/2 of Sept. 8 (1425/362792) Rintelen informed Bräuer that the document here printed had been transmitted to the Reich Ministry of Propaganda with the comment that the Foreign Ministry was in agreement with the opinion expressed therein.

<sup>4</sup> The document here printed is a draft.

## No. 528

3409/E014023-35

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

Written on the way from Bucharest to Berlin, September 6, 1935.

Received September 7.

Pol. IV 2837.

Subject: Conversation with Antonescu, the new Rumanian Foreign Minister.

On September 5, shortly before leaving for the Reich Party Rally, I had an opportunity of speaking with Antonescu,<sup>1</sup> the new Rumanian Foreign Minister. I venture to report on this conversation, which took place in the Foreign Ministry, as follows:

After Titulescu's successor, whom I had already known when he was Finance Minister, and I had exchanged a few cordial words, M. Antonescu told me that he had been surprised at Bad Reichenhall by the telegram summoning him to Bucharest. His wife was finishing her cure there whilst he, unfortunately—contrary to press reports—was now unable to return there. He had made numerous motoring tours in Bavaria from Reichenhall and had been astonished at the work being done there, at the cheerful and confident frame of mind of the people and the good food which was to be had everywhere. He had been "astonished" because, prior to his departure, he had heard so much here that was unfavourable about the situation in Germany; reports that there was great discontent there, that the people were hardly getting enough to eat and that a crisis was imminent in the labour market. I told M. Antonescu that, unfortunately, I too had recently found that false reports about Germany were being disseminated and that in contrast to these the voices of the many people who, like himself, had visited Germany and had seen the real conditions for themselves were

<sup>1</sup> Victor Antonescu, who was appointed Foreign Minister during the Cabinet changes of Aug. 29-30, on the circumstances of which Fabricius reported in despatch 2173 I H 5 of Sept. 1 (3409/E013995-4009).

scarcely sufficient to counter the mendacious reports of the Jewish press in Rumania. I pointed out that these papers were committing a crime against the Rumanian people in that they misled them with such lies. I would take the liberty of reverting to this matter in the near future with concrete examples.

We then discussed Rumania's foreign policy and the dropping of Titulescu. The Foreign Minister gave me as the reason for Titulescu's dismissal the arbitrary way in which he had conducted his policy. In particular he had pursued a *rapprochement* with Soviet Russia in a manner which the Government had not desired. It was true that Titulescu asserted that he had never in any way, not even secretly, conceded to the Russians the right of military passage through Rumanian territory, nor had he made such a promise to France. When I asked whether France had in any way conceded to Russia rights of military passage through Rumania (see telegram from Bucharest of September 4 [*sic*]<sup>2</sup>) and [said] that such a concession must surely have been based on an assurance from Titulescu, M. Antonescu denied having any knowledge of such a treaty or such an assurance. Through his pro-Russian policy Titulescu had fallen out completely with Poland and her Foreign Minister, Beck, but the Rumanian Government were adhering to their policy of alliance with Poland and wished to strengthen this alliance anew. Titulescu had had to go in order to make this possible.

This, of course, did not mean that the Government intended to adopt an anti-Russian policy. They feared this 84 million [*sic*] nation in their near neighbourhood and it was their sole wish to be on good terms with this neighbour. M. Antonescu had therefore been able to tell the Russian Chargé d'Affaires, who had asked him whether Titulescu's departure meant a change in Rumania's policy *vis-à-vis* Russia and a *rapprochement* with Germany, that there was no question of this. He could assure me that no alliance would be concluded with Soviet Russia; he did not even think that the possibility of a non-aggression pact with a mutual assistance clause as had been previously contemplated would now be considered. Rumania did not in any way wish to play too active a part in European affairs for fear that if she did she would at some time become the theatre of a war between Germany and Russia.

Her relations with France were Rumania's first concern. He admitted that good relations with France need not mean bad relations with Germany. Naturally Rumania would very much welcome a *rapprochement* between France and Germany. He thought that Blum, although a Jew, was still the best man to bring about such a *rapprochement*. I said that I too thought this quite possible, and that perhaps the visit which Herr Schacht, the President of the Reichsbank, had

<sup>2</sup> Evidently a reference to telegram No. 122 of Sept. 3 (1650/391955).



paid to Paris, had already produced a favourable effect in this direction.<sup>3</sup> Naturally, these fragile threads would be broken if France veered towards Bolshevism, but this could not yet be foreseen at the present time. It depended partly on the outcome of the struggle in Spain.

M. Antonescu was of the opinion that the victory of the Nationalists in Spain, with whom the Rumanian Government sympathized, was assured. I told him that according to reports which I had received privately the victory of the Nationalists was not yet assured, but that we, too, hoped for this as otherwise there might be a catastrophe in Europe. In any case it seemed as though the struggle would continue for a long time to come and would give rise to further conflicts if France and Soviet Russia allowed "private" munitions and ordnance supplies to reach the Madrid Government. Should Bolshevism be victorious in Spain there would be a very great danger that it would then also take firm root in France. M. Antonescu fully shared this view.

When I asked how the new Foreign Minister viewed relations between Rumania and Germany, he said that he greatly desired a further improvement in these relations. Rumania had never harboured any feelings of enmity against Germany, but only against Austria-Hungary. Their economic relations had for years been very close and it was his wish that these should continue to be fostered. But in other respects, too, relations could be improved, especially if Germany could come to an understanding with Britain and France on the question of the safeguarding of peace.

He himself had been Minister in France for five years and in that capacity had participated in the conclusion of the Trianon Treaty. He therefore had close associations with France and was well acquainted with all the leading personalities there. He did not know Germany very well but had come to appreciate her importance in Rumania's economic life whilst he was Minister of Finance.

Turning to [Rumania's] internal policy, M. Antonescu thought that this would not change very much. The "Iron Guard"<sup>4</sup> would have to stop its acts of terrorism; unfortunately no reliance could be placed upon the assurances of its leader Codreanu in this respect. Terrorism and banditry, familiar in Macedonia, had been unknown in Rumania until now, and they must cease. The Government were firmly resolved to restore order. He thought that this would be possible with the means of power available to the State. When I suggested that anti-Semitism might be too widespread in the country to allow for the tranquillization of the population, and in particular of the students, Antonescu replied: "We all hate the Jews, not only the students

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<sup>3</sup> Schacht arrived in Paris on Aug. 25 to return the visit made earlier in the month to Berlin by M. Labeyrie, the new Governor of the Bank of France.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 440 with footnote 5 thereto.



and the parties of the Right." The latter, he said, wanted to imitate Hitler but this would be of little advantage to German-Rumanian relations as, in order to fight the parties of the Right, who after all were their opponents, the Liberals in the Government would naturally be forced to adopt an anti-Hitler attitude, although in their heart of hearts they did not wish to do so. I replied that we had nothing to do with the political struggle inside Rumania, whereupon he remarked that although he was aware of this, we should also avoid giving the impression [of interference], as this would be exploited by the press. I told M. Antonescu in reply that we would be glad if other parties in Rumania would give us some proof of their friendship; so far such proof had emanated from the camp of those same parties of the Right and we could not reject it.

Finally M. Antonescu observed that at Reichenhall he had met Comnen, the Minister in Berlin, who had given him an enthusiastic account of the Olympic Games in Berlin. Comnen was an old adherent of the Liberal party; he would leave him at his post.

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The most significant point in the Rumanian Foreign Minister's observations appears to be that Rumania is seeking a return to the alliance with Poland which had cooled off as a result of Titulescu's pro-Russian policy on the one hand, and Beck's pro-German policy on the other. Since the exchange of visits between the French and Polish generals<sup>5</sup> it is generally believed in Bucharest that Poland is attempting to turn away from Germany in order to pursue her old policy of alliance with France. The Rumanian Government would like to be included in this system once again, as, owing to the occupation of the Rhineland, they feel militarily cut off from French assistance. This means a turning away from Soviet Russia, although they would not yet wish to admit, for fear of their powerful neighbour, that this change in policy was a "turning away".<sup>6</sup> If Germany should succeed in maintaining her present policy of friendship with Poland and in

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<sup>5</sup> Gen. Gamelin visited Warsaw Aug. 12-16; Gen. Smigly-Rydz visited Paris Aug. 30, returning to Warsaw on Sept. 10. See also documents Nos. 506 and 518.

<sup>6</sup> A circular, Pol. IV, 2837 II, dated Sept. 25 (1921/431156-61) and based on the document here printed, the report cited in footnote 1 above and on European press comment was sent to the main diplomatic missions and to the Consulate at Geneva. Its concluding paragraph reads: "Our own attitude to the fall of Titulescu is determined by the conviction that since the end of the war Titulescu has played a leading part in all international situations in which there was a chance of undertaking something, whether openly or covertly, against Germany. Titulescu was an absolute opponent of any sort of revision, however minor in character, of the status created by the Treaty of Versailles and sought to render this status fixed and immutable by a system of pacts of all kinds. In Titulescu's departure one can see a possibility of a certain relaxation in Rumanian foreign policy, a possibility which, however, is hardly improved by the personality of the new Foreign Minister or by the statements made by him. It can nevertheless be taken as certain that the pro-Soviet line of Rumanian foreign policy will be somewhat modified."

preventing Poland from once again being drawn into the French alliance system, Rumania would probably feel more and more isolated and would then perhaps be prepared to make common cause with us.

In order that the Rumanian press may be worked upon in the proper sense, I would request that the Press Attaché for whom I applied should be sent out soon, if possible by October 1.

I would ask you to be good enough to send a copy of this letter to the Legation in Bucharest.

FABRICIUS

## No. 529

1833/418784-87

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 3304

LONDON, September 7, 1936.

Received September 9.

Pol. I 2000.

Subject: Conversation with Sir Robert Craigie regarding the effects of the refortification of the Dardanelles on the German strategical position at sea.

With reference to your despatch, Pol. I 1316, of August 20, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

As the Foreign Office during the past fortnight has been almost completely deserted, it was not until today, on the occasion of a conversation with Sir Robert Craigie who had just returned from leave, that I had a chance to carry out the instructions contained in your despatch under reference. In an urgent manner I pointed out to Sir Robert how seriously the present German position, viewed from the aspect of naval strategy, had been affected by the fortification of the Dardanelles and I set out in detail both of the reasons for our view which are given in your despatch. As instructed in your despatch, I did not give my representations the form of an *ad hoc démarche*, and I likewise confined myself to pointing out to Sir Robert the altered situation only, without putting forward any German demands arising therefrom.

From the conversation, which was carried on in the most friendly manner, I did not gain the impression that the argument I advanced convinced Sir Robert of the correctness of our view that the present German position from the aspect of naval strategy had suffered severely from the refortification of the Straits. Sir Robert at first replied in general terms that Turkey by refortifying the Dardanelles would become politically much more independent of other Powers than had

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 462, footnote 2.

hitherto been the case, and this would most certainly have its effect on Turkey's relations with Russia too. He could assure me, in confidence, that just recently there had been a marked *rapprochement* between Turkey and Britain, which he certainly believed would be lasting. Turkey had for a long time feared Italian attempts at expansion and during the Italo-Abyssinian war had therefore been very ready to declare herself prepared to join in the agreement of the various Mediterranean Powers with Britain against an Italian attack. But even after the conclusion of the Abyssinian war, Turkey had shown herself desirous of increasing still further the Anglo-Turkish *rapprochement*. At the Conference of Montreux the British Government by their far-reaching accommodation towards and sympathy for the Turkish desires had won Turkey's goodwill, while Russia, who in all the subjects under discussion had looked only to her own advantage, had actually left behind her a certain degree of ill-feeling amongst the Turks.

In respect of the examples I gave of the deterioration in the German strategic position at sea arising out of the refortification of the Dardanelles, Sir Robert first of all stated that, as regards the possibility thereby created for the egress of the Russian Black Sea Fleet in time of war under various provisions of the Agreement, whilst the German fleet was prevented from pursuit and from taking action at all in the Black Sea, this case (in contrast with the previous position) could, under the Montreux Convention, only arise *de facto* if Turkey had formally entered into a pact of mutual assistance to which Russia belonged and of which the League of Nations had been notified. Had Turkey concluded such a pact with Russia, and had I made representations on the basis of such a fact, then he would certainly acknowledge such German representations as justified. But this was not the case at present and he could assure me that Turkey would not conclude such a pact with Russia. Moreover, he must also point out that even without Turkey having refortified the Dardanelles, the Russian Fleet would not have risked denuding the Black Sea completely of naval forces nor, in particular, could the German Naval Staff today accept, without being absolutely sure of Turkey's attitude, responsibility for allowing the German fleet to enter the Black Sea, given the possibility of its being shut up in the Black Sea by guns which Turkey could rapidly bring up.

In respect of the second reason which I had advanced for the deterioration in the German strategical position at sea, namely, that the Russian Black Sea fleet could emerge from the Black Sea, thus releasing the naval forces of other Powers, the defence of the Black Sea having been taken over by Turkey in consequence of the fortification of the Straits, he said that this example did not appear to him to be convincing either. In the first place, in the event of Turkey being neutral this



would again require Turkey's accession to an assistance pact concluded by Soviet Russia. But even apart from this, he was convinced that Russia would never run the risk of entirely denuding the Black Sea by sending her fleet into other waters, or, indeed, of leaving the defence of the Black Sea so completely to another Power such as Turkey, with all the possibilities of political blackmail which Turkey would thus be afforded.

I told Sir Robert in reply that I could not share the optimism with which he was seeking to dispel the anxieties which we had expressed. According to our information, relations between Turkey and Soviet Russia were still extremely close, and whether in case of emergency the Treaty of Montreux would form a real impediment to Turkey's decisions seemed to me doubtful to say the least. The Reich Government who, as he knew, were watching Russia's immense rearmament in all spheres with increasing anxiety, were compelled, for reasons of German security, to devote their most serious attention to all relevant strategic consequences, and there was no doubt that the refortification of the Dardanelles by Turkey had afforded Russia advantages in the sphere of naval strategy, in that it gave the Russian fleet a new freedom of movement, while it had impaired that of the German fleet.<sup>2</sup>

BISMARCK<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "In view of the fact that the same theme is being discussed in the naval negotiations, please send a copy to Herr Kordt for the inst[ru]ction of Amb[assador] v[on] Ribbentrop. W[ermann], [Sept.] 9." (ii) "Already done. Schm[ieden], Sept. 10."

<sup>3</sup> In a further despatch on this conversation, A 3471 of Sept. 7 (1683/395986-87), Bismarck reported that Craigie had asked whether he could soon expect a statement of German views on the Memorandum on the result of the Anglo-Soviet naval conversations (see document No. 486, enclosure).

## No. 530

8917/E622214-15

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 183 of September 9

[LONDON, September 9, 1936.]

Received September 10—8:35 a.m.

Pol. I 2014.

Sir Robert Vansittart sent for me this afternoon and requested me to transmit to the Reich Government the British Government's proposal that the projected Five Power Conference should take place in London in the second half of October. The British Government felt that the moment had come to decide on the venue and date of the meeting, and would be grateful for early information as to whether the Reich Government were in agreement with this proposal. He had



asked the representatives of the other Powers concerned to call on him this afternoon too and had conveyed the same proposal to them. Once the various Powers' approval had been received, the next task would be to prepare the questions to be dealt with at the conference by a diplomatic exchange of views. The British Government had not yet drawn up a precise programme for this diplomatic exchange of views but he was of the opinion that such a programme would develop entirely of its own accord and that the role of a kind of "clearing house"<sup>1</sup> for the various proposals and counter proposals would probably fall to London. Although the Foreign Office had already concerned themselves with the subject matter, the preparatory work had not yet been concluded.

At this opportunity, as on earlier occasions, I stressed how indispensable a thorough diplomatic preparation of the conference seemed to us, with which Vansittart completely agreed.<sup>2</sup>

BISMARCK

<sup>1</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum of Sept. 9 (3317/E007744) Woermann recorded a telephoned report by Bismarck on this conversation.

## No. 531

1872/423771-77

*The Foreign Ministry to the Embassies in France, Italy and Great Britain and to the Legation in Belgium*

Drafting Officer:  
Counsellor Schmieden.

BERLIN, September 9, 1936.

Sent September 10.

[zu] Pol. I 1978.1  
1979.2

During the last few days, the French and Italian Ambassadors and the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>3</sup> have called at the Foreign Ministry to inform themselves of our attitude to the approaching West Pact negotiations. It has not been a matter of the actual opening of the diplomatic preliminary negotiations, for which a British initiative is expected, but of purely personal soundings.

M. François-Poncet attached especial importance to discovering whether we were prepared to go to the conference and to negotiate on the first points of the programme<sup>4</sup> without raising the fifth point, or

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> This was a copy of the memorandum by Dieckhoff on the conversation with François-Poncet on Sept. 1 (1872/423768-70) which is summarized in the document here printed; another copy of the Dieckhoff memorandum with marginalia by Neurath is printed in vol. III of Series D, document No. 66.

<sup>3</sup> Baron Hervé de Gruben.

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

whether we now at once wanted to compel the French Government expressly to renounce the fifth point, that is to say, the commitments in the East [of Europe]. In other words: Were the German Government adopting the view that the Western Pact could first be negotiated upon, leaving the Eastern questions open, or were they requiring from the outset that France renounce her Eastern ties before Germany would discuss a Western Pact. Were Germany to follow the first method, then he believed he could say that the Franco-Russian ties would gradually cool, particularly since they had never been popular with a large section of the French people; we would then attain our objective slowly but surely. If, on the other hand, we applied pressure now to the French Government and demanded that they give up their Russian alliance, the French Government could only refuse to do so.

The Ambassador was merely told in reply that he must clearly realize that in Germany we had grown even more conscious of the Russian danger in the last few months than we had formerly been and that in fact the Franco-Russian Pact was now viewed in an even more serious light than before. To his question as to which of the two courses Germany would take with regard to the French Government, no reply was made.

Signor Attolico<sup>5</sup> interested himself primarily in the realization of the project for an Air Pact. He said that since this project was first mooted he had repeatedly posed the question in the Ministry here as to how we envisaged its realization, but had hitherto obtained no definite answer. It was, however, clear that if the Five Locarno Powers were now to promise each other mutual support in the air, the new Western Pact would become a treaty having quite a different character from that of the old Rhine Pact, which did not envisage any mutual support between the parties. Italy had a quite basic interest in the Western Pact not becoming a regional pact with *assistance mutuelle*; this was because a model would thus be created which would determine a corresponding Mediterranean pact. The British did not, admittedly, want a relationship of mutual assistance between Britain and Italy stipulated in the Air Pact; they were obviously thinking in terms of two tripartite agreements being concluded, namely, on the one hand between Germany, Britain and France, and, on the other, between Germany, France and Italy. But even if the pacts were to be shaped in this way, it would still involve sanctioning the concept of *assistance mutuelle*, which Italy, for the reasons he had already given, did not desire in any circumstances.

The Ambassador was told that we had not yet formulated any definitive principles as to how the Western Pact should be shaped in

<sup>5</sup> This passage on Attolico's views is taken from a memorandum of Aug. 22 (408/215105-07) by Gaus on a conversation held with him on Aug. 21.

detail, more particularly in respect of settling the question of support against air attacks. It was naturally clear to us that mutual support in the air would, in comparison with the old Rhine Pact, introduce a completely new factor of far-reaching significance into the new Western Pact. We had hitherto heard nothing of the British idea of concluding two tripartite agreements on rendering support in the air. To our knowledge the previous diplomatic conversations on the Air Pact project, in so far as we had taken part in them, had in the main revolved around two points, namely, in the first place whether there could also be bound up with the Air Pact an agreement on the reduction of air forces, and secondly, whether the Pact was to be supplemented by bilateral agreements between various of the parties to it, a point which the French Government had apparently demanded with great determination in their earlier conversation with the British Government.

The Ambassador was then referred to the whole history of the development of this problem, and his attention drawn to the fact that the Western Pact brought up yet another very difficult problem, namely, the relationship of this pact to the French Treaties of Alliance.

Signor Attolico fully admitted the decisive importance of this question and the difficulty of resolving it, and he said that France would have to make up her mind whether she would prefer to see her security guaranteed by Moscow or by Germany. He added that Germany must support Italy in her rejection of mutual assistance pacts; Italy would then in turn support us in our opposition to the French Treaties of Alliance.

The Belgian Chargé d'Affaires<sup>6</sup> assumed that his Government would finally adopt the familiar point of view, that Belgium would not take on any more far-reaching military obligations than the defence of her own frontiers. This came close to her old neutrality policy but with the difference that Belgium would not undertake an obligation of neutrality and her neutrality would not be guaranteed. Against that, Belgium laid decisive value on receiving on her side the same obligations of assistance as she did in the Rhine Pact of Locarno. The Chargé d'Affaires saw in the Franco-Soviet Russian Pact a scarcely surmountable obstacle to the realization of a Western Pact.

From the British side, no steps on the Western Pact question have so far been taken here.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>6</sup> In a memorandum, Pol. I 1868 of Aug. 29 (3618/E027251-52), Woermann recorded a conversation that day with the Belgian Chargé d'Affaires, Baron de Gruben.



## No. 532

2558/523884

*Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

NUREMBERG, September 10, 1936.

Arising out of Prince Bismarck's report,<sup>1</sup> conveyed by Minister Woermann, regarding the British invitation to the Western Pact conference in the second half of October, and after consulting the Foreign Minister, I telephoned Minister von Weizsäcker in Berlin this morning and requested him to instruct Prince Bismarck by telegram to the effect that he should inform Sir Robert Vansittart that we were certainly still prepared to take part in a Western Pact conference, but that we were surprised to see from Sir Robert Vansittart's statement of yesterday to the representatives of the Four Powers, that the conference was apparently to take place without previous diplomatic preparation. Such a procedure was contrary to previous agreements, according to which a detailed and thorough diplomatic preparation of the conference was first to take place. We could see no promise of success in a conference which had not been thoroughly prepared beforehand, and just because we desired the conference to be a success, it must be prepared in advance. The idea which evidently existed in London, that it was only necessary to sit round a table, appeared to us to be wrong, and indeed the British had been told so by us from the outset. We were all the more surprised by Sir Robert Vansittart's action yesterday inasmuch as from Prince Bismarck's latest reports we had definitely assumed that at the beginning of September the preparations for the conference would be set in motion by a British initiative, a procedure with which we would have been in complete agreement.

The Foreign Minister, who was present at the second part of the telephone conversation, told Herr von Weizsäcker that in the instructions to Prince Bismarck he should expressly point out that Sir Robert Vansittart had expressly promised Herr von Neurath a thorough diplomatic preparation of the conference.<sup>2</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 530 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Weizsäcker sent instructions in this sense to the Embassy in London in telegram No. 211 of September 11 (8917/622216-17), of which the concluding portion reads: "On the special instructions of the Foreign Minister you should add that it is true that there was talk between the Foreign Minister and Vansittart of the second half of October being a conceivable date, but the Foreign Minister expressly described this as the earliest possible date, and always on condition that by that time the diplomatic preparations had advanced sufficiently. In your communication you should state quite plainly that the date must remain open until the preparations have been brought to a point where the conference can become a real success." The Embassies in Paris, Rome [No. 200] and Brussels were informed by telegram of these instructions on September 10 (8917/E622218), the latter two posts being also instructed to ascertain what reception the British proposal had met with from the Governments there. See also document No. 541 with footnote 11 thereto.



## No. 533

1872/423778-81

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram by Courier

No. 153 of September 11

ROME, September 11, 1936.

Received September 12—4:10 p.m.

Pol. I 2059.

Subject: Conversation with Count Ciano.

I have the following to report on my today's conversation with Count Ciano:

1. *Five Power Conference.* (With reference to your telegram No. 200 of September 10.)<sup>1</sup>

I set forth our point of view to Count Ciano in accordance with your telegram and asked him about the Italian Government's views. Ciano replied that he had just been working on instructions to the Italian Ambassador in London and the Italian Chargé d'Affaires in Berlin about the Italian Government's views. The Italian Government fully shared our views and were, like ourselves, of the opinion that thorough diplomatic preparation for the Locarno conference was necessary and that it was therefore at the moment impossible to commit oneself to a date. Ciano read out to me the instructions to the Italian Ambassador in London.

2. *Avenol's visit to Rome.* (With reference to my telegram No. 150 of September 9.)<sup>2</sup>

On my question as to the purpose of Avenol's visit to Rome and the substance of his conversations here, Count Ciano told me that Avenol had come here to ascertain what were the conditions on which Italy would be prepared to return to Geneva. He (Count Ciano) had told him that Italy was setting only one condition, namely, that an Abyssinian delegation would not be tolerated. Avenol had replied that, for reasons connected with the formal procedure of the League of Nations, non-admission in advance was not possible, but he had held out the prospect of the Committee entrusted with the examination of plenipotentiary powers declaring the plenipotentiary powers of the

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 532, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7215/E530115-16). In this telegram Plessen reported confidential information from a reliable source on Avenol's visit; for Ciano's record of his conversation with Avenol on Sept. 7, see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 60-62 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 33-34).

Abyssinian delegation invalid. Ciano added that this proposal was admittedly for the present only M. Avenol's personal opinion and that the decision lay with the League of Nations. The situation today was, therefore, that Italy would in no circumstances take part in the session of the League *Council* and would not participate in the first meeting of the Assembly either. If the Abyssinian delegation did not appear at this first meeting or was sent away again, Italy would take part in the second meeting. Should the Abyssinian delegation appear and be tolerated, then Italy would probably not return to Geneva at all.

Count Ciano further said that he had also told Avenol that Italy did not at the present moment intend to concern herself with proposals for the reform of the League.

3. *The Meeting in Venice between Under Secretary of State Bastianini and the Chief of the Polish General Staff.*<sup>3</sup>

On my question as to the purpose of the meeting, and the substance of any conversations, Ciano replied that he had not so far heard anything from Bastianini, who had not yet returned to Rome. Should Bastianini, on his return, tell him anything that might be of interest to the German Government, he would inform me.

4. *Démentis of September 5 and 6 regarding the alleged Italian willingness to admit Russia to the Locarno Conference.*

On my question as to what had given rise to the *démentis*, Count Ciano told me that they were due to an official of the Press Ministry having replied in the affirmative to a question from a journalist as to whether Italy would agree to the inclusion of Russia, when he should have replied in the negative. Italy, like Germany, was fundamentally opposed to Russian participation and took the view that the Western questions with which the Locarno Powers were concerned should be discussed and settled by these Powers alone. Whether Eastern questions should be dealt with too must be left for later decision. (Compare on this, paragraph 2 [*sic*: 3] of my report No. 4120 of September 3.)<sup>4</sup>

5. *The Inclusion of Abyssinia and the Italian Colonies in the German-Italian clearing.*

I am reporting separately on this subject, with reference to my report No. 4116 of September 3.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Gen. Stachiewicz.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (1486/368519-20). This commented upon Mussolini's speech at Avellino on Aug. 31, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7445/E540284-85).

At the end of our conversation Count Ciano, observing that it was very important, asked me to suggest that our Chargé d'Affaires in London should be instructed to maintain the closest contact with the Italian Ambassador in London over questions connected with the Co-ordination Committee.<sup>6</sup> I replied that so far as I knew, our Chargé d'Affaires had already been instructed in this sense,<sup>7</sup> which Count Ciano admitted, but requested even closer contact than hitherto. It was extremely important, he said, that Germany and Italy should act in parallel over questions concerning Spain, just as in other fields a very welcome parallelism between their respective activities was to be observed. Count Ciano went on to express his great satisfaction about Reich Minister Goebbels' speech at Nuremberg,<sup>8</sup> to which he could subscribe one hundred per cent. He asked that Reich Minister Goebbels should be so informed.

PLESSEN

<sup>6</sup> The reference is to the Non-Intervention Committee, set up in London to supervise the embargo on arms deliveries to the participants in the Spanish Civil War; see vol. III of Series D, chapter I, *passim*.

<sup>7</sup> See vol III of Series D, documents Nos. 74 and 78.

<sup>8</sup> Goebbels spoke on Sept. 10 at the Nuremberg Party Rally on "Bolshevism in Theory and Practice".

## No. 534

1528/373826-31

*Circular of the Foreign Ministry*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, September 12, 1936.

Drafting Officer:

zu Pol. IV 2882.2

Counsellor Busse.

Addition for Rome only: With reference to your despatch No. 3435 of July 17.<sup>3</sup>

During the month of August the Hungarian Minister here enquired whether the Foreign Ministry had had any reports which indicated an improvement in Italo-Yugoslav relations. In reporting on this subject Herr von Heeren has given the following impressions of a general kind which agree with our appreciation of the present situation:

Yugoslavia's policy *vis-à-vis* Italy is purely defensive. Yugoslavia imperatively needs peace abroad for her internal consolidation. She is

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Rome, Paris, London, Prague, Bucharest, Vienna and Tirana; the Legation in Belgrade received a copy for information.

<sup>2</sup> A letter from Heeren to Woermann dated Aug. 31 (1528/373822-25) on which much of the document here printed is based. This letter was in reply to one from Woermann of Aug. 27 (1528/373813-16) enquiring about the prospects of an improvement in Yugoslav-Italian relations and quoting Hassell's despatch 3435 of July 17 on the subject.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 457.

therefore prepared to accept the sacrifices which the maintenance of the existing territorial position implies both for her territory and her nation. That is to say, Yugoslavia renounces her claim to acquire Istria and Gorizia, the Quarnero islands and also Zara and the Lagosta archipelago.

In these circumstances it will depend primarily upon Italy whether the tension created by Italy's thrusting into the Balkans, particularly in Albania, persists. If Yugoslavia could satisfy herself that Italy too was reconciled to the *status quo* in the Adriatic then she would willingly diminish tension in relations with Italy, who is such an economically important neighbour. But in this respect Yugoslavia still lacks any confidence whatsoever. On the contrary, only quite recently various things have come up which have revived Yugoslav mistrust of Italian policy. Amongst them is, in general terms, the strengthening of Italy's political power and standing as a result of her victory in Abyssinia. Further, the new Italo-Albanian Treaties<sup>4</sup> are regarded as the building up of a bridgehead against Yugoslavia, and the Italo-Austro-Hungarian bloc created by the Rome Pacts<sup>5</sup> appears to be the symbol of a policy of encirclement directed against Yugoslavia. Added to this is the displeasure caused by the release, upon the new Italian Foreign Minister, Ciano, taking office, of the Croat *émigré* leaders Pavelić and Kvaternik who are regarded in Yugoslavia as the real murderers of King Alexander, and, finally, the ever-growing impression that latterly Italy has again been giving financial support to the Croat separatist activities. The sudden recall of the Italian Minister Viola, who was only sent to Belgrade eighteen months ago, apparently as to some extent an emissary of peace, and his replacement by the Italian Minister from Tirana, the originator of the fresh Italo-Albanian Treaties, were also not calculated to dispel Yugoslav mistrust.

Nevertheless, one should not regard the initiation of a reasonable *modus vivendi* between Yugoslavia and Italy as being completely hopeless, particularly at the present time, since the required conditions for such relations are already there provided Mussolini realizes that for many years to come he will need to concentrate all his country's resources on exploiting Abyssinia and that Yugoslavia who so greatly desires peace can represent no danger to him in the foreseeable future. All the same, any genuine Italo-Yugoslav settlement would also require some Yugoslav-Hungarian settlement, since Italy's prestige would not permit of Hungary's being left in the lurch. But a Yugoslav-Hungarian settlement is impeded by the almost insurmountable obstacle formed by the aspirations which derive from the Hungarian ideology and cause Hungary to lay claim to large parts of Yugoslav

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 216, footnote 2.

<sup>5</sup> I.e., the Rome Protocols; see document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.



territory. Thus one must beware of indulging in any illusions about the possibilities of a far-reaching settlement and be content if acute and unnecessary friction in Yugoslav-Hungarian and Yugoslav-Italian relations is avoided as much as possible.

Thus the question arises as to whether and to what extent Germany too might be able to make some contribution towards bringing about a tolerable situation between these three countries. In this connexion it is of significance that Herr von Heeren has repeatedly derived the impression from his conversations with M. Stojadinović about the German-Austrian Agreement<sup>6</sup> that Stojadinović thought it possible that an improvement in relations between his country and Italy might result from the German-Italian *rapprochement*.

*Addition for Rome and Budapest:*

Should an opportunity offer for you to make use of these ideas in the course of conversation, this would conform to our views. You might draw attention to the common interest which Germany, Italy and Hungary all must have in the establishment of good relations with a state like Yugoslavia which has not yet become susceptible to the political influence of the Soviets.

*Additions for Paris, London, Prague, Bucharest, Vienna and Tirana:*

Our Embassy in Rome and Legation in Budapest have been instructed that it would be in accordance with our views if these ideas could be put forward there. Attention might be drawn to the common interest which Germany, Italy and Hungary all must have in the establishment of good relations with a country like Yugoslavia which has not yet become susceptible to the political influence of the Soviets.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>6</sup> See also document No. 449.

No. 535

2092/452532-34

*Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division IV*

BERLIN, September 12, 1936.

W IV OE. 2024.

In the various conferences<sup>1</sup> with the Departments concerned, about the shaping of our commercial relations with Soviet Russia in 1937, I put forward the following views on behalf of the Foreign Ministry:

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<sup>1</sup> One such meeting which took place in the Ministry of Economics on July 16 was recorded by Schnurre in a memorandum of July 20 (3781/E041288-91).

We realize that the Economic Treaty of April 29, 1936,<sup>2</sup> contains a number of serious defects. In particular these defects stem from the fact that there is no obligation whatsoever for the Russians to supply us with raw materials in the quantities desired by us, and that no concrete programme has been laid down for current orders to be placed by the Russians in Germany either. In consequence, the exchange of goods under the Agreement has developed unsatisfactorily. Both deliveries from the Soviet Union and Russian orders placed with us have been extremely meagre. In the discussions about a prolongation of the Agreement of April 29, 1936, which are scheduled to take place with the Trade Delegation here in the near future (October), particular efforts should, therefore, be made to obtain an improved settlement of these two questions for 1937. The prospects of success in both matters are extremely poor. Apart from the Russians' general disinclination to enter into any long term commitments towards us with regard to deliveries of raw materials, there is the difficulty that for reasons of military policy we cannot supply the Russians with what they would like to obtain from us. In consequence, a larger programme of deliveries of Russian raw materials to Germany would not afford the Russians the certainty of being able to dispose of the Reichsmarks accruing from exports as they wished, i.e., by purchasing war materials. Furthermore, with regard to other German goods which are not in the nature of war materials there are considerable difficulties over the prices and delivery dates offered by German industry, and this constitutes a further element of uncertainty. It is therefore to be firmly expected that the Russians will refuse to enter into any commitments with regard to their obligations to make deliveries, just as they did in the 1936 treaty. But in this event, too, the extension of the Economic Treaty of April 29, 1936, just as it is, even with all its obvious defects, would be preferable to an unregulated and treaty-less state of affairs with the Soviet Union. The Treaty does at least provide, from the technical and formal point of view, a framework into which, given better political and economic circumstances, larger transactions could be fitted. A treaty-less state of affairs would be hard to remedy, and would mean the more or less total rupture of economic relations with the Soviet Union. In addition there is the important positive factor that in the extension treaty for 1937 there could be included the same obligation for the Russians to make payment in gold as was the case for 1936, that is to say, in the year 1937 the Russians would continue to meet their obligations arising from previous bills of exchange in gold or foreign exchange. The Russians have let it be known that they would declare themselves in agreement with this

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 302.

clause. Finally it should be borne in mind that even an improved treaty would only benefit us if concluded in good time. In view of the Russians' ponderous methods of negotiating, it is, however, to be expected that the conclusion of an agreement providing for a concrete programme of deliveries and orders would be so long delayed that at the beginning of 1937 we would be faced with the same situation as at the beginning of the present year. The Russians, invoking the unclarified commercial position *vis-à-vis* Germany, would find other markets for their raw materials, which are, after all, in great demand elsewhere, and would give us the go-by.

The Reich Ministry of Economics are in agreement with this train of thought. The Reich Ministry of Food have reserved judgement but will, as far as my information goes, also express their agreement.

SCHNURRE

### No. 536

218/148015-17

#### *The Chargé d'Affaires in China to the Foreign Ministry*

Cipher Letter

7214/5795

NANKING, September 14, 1936.

Received October 2.

Pol. VIII 1195.

### MEMORANDUM

According to information from General von Reichenau, the present state of the Hapro discussions is as follows:

The economic negotiations are being conducted by Klein.

Reichenau confined himself, in the main, to discussions of a military nature, especially concerning the setting up of a Ministry of National Defence in which all the economic and financial personnel, etc. are to be concentrated for the purpose of preparing for operations in the event of war.

The German side will, in effect, supply only war material for the time being, in accordance with a programme which takes up some 80 per cent of the credit which has been made available. Deliveries will take place in the course of the next 6-8 months almost wholly from army stocks.

In order to increase the production of ore beyond its present extent, the programme also includes for the next year the delivery of tools, machines and mining plant.

For the purchase of the raw materials which the Chinese side are to supply, Chiang Kai-shek has ordered 30 million Mexican dollars<sup>1</sup> to be made available, which are to be used for shipments up to the end of this year.

The purchase and assembling ("for" is apparently missing)<sup>2</sup> the Chinese deliveries will be controlled by the Central Trust alone; approval, however, is to be furnished by German experts; the employment of German firms for testing and approval is under consideration. Transport will be effected by German ships; all shipping firms at work here are to be brought in. The deliveries will include oil fruits, antimony, wolfram, molybdenum, copper and tin. Two German professors of geology have been assigned to the Klein Mission.

The negotiators state that the whole transaction will be a supplementary one and that existing imports and exports are not to be affected by it, except for the arms business. They are expecting the remaining German trade to be revived as a result of the increase in the purchasing power of the people in consequence of increased Chinese exports.

It is envisaged that the prices of the goods to be supplied from China will conform to world market prices. For the German deliveries the standard will be the prices obtaining in Germany.

As regards the danger of the transaction being obstructed by the Japanese, Reichenau thinks that he can count upon a certain amount of support from the British, since they can only welcome it if Germany departs from her previous policy of only having an economic interest in the Far East and thus becomes a natural ally of Britain in her struggle against Japanese hegemony in the Far East. British participation in the treaty (naval armaments) is, he thinks, also possible.

Resistance to the agreement has, he says, also been displayed by the Chinese, and principally by the Minister of Finance. The latter has now been given strict instructions by Chiang Kai-shek, which he is carrying out.

Chiang Kai-shek has said he is willing to accede to the Canton agreements.<sup>3</sup>

Reichenau is leaving on the *Scharnhorst* on September 23.

FISCHER

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note in Benzler's handwriting: "About 20-22 Mill[ion] RM."

<sup>2</sup> Thus in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 156, and footnote 5 thereto, 206, and 238.



## No. 537

218/147999-8000

*Memorandum by the Head of the German Economic Mission to the Far East*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, September 15, 1936.

W VII OA 1070.

A few days ago, Field Marshal von Blomberg asked me to call on him in order to tell him about the results of the Mission's journey to the Far East, especially with regard to China and the Klein deal.

I reported about the journey and pointed out that the Mission, in accordance with the instructions given to it by Dr. Schacht, had repeatedly placed itself at Herr Klein's disposal, but that he had avoided getting in touch with the Mission either personally or through his representatives in China. I described the disquiet which, as a result of the secrecy of the Klein negotiations and the circulation of exaggerated rumours, had arisen amongst the political and economic circles concerned, and especially amongst the German commercial houses in China, and which the official German authorities there had, for lack of any kind of briefing, been unable to counter to the desired degree. As a result of the publication of the alleged contents of a German-Chinese State Treaty, this disquiet had been considerably increased and it needed—apart from the political questions thus raised and of which the Foreign Ministry took a very serious view, especially with regard to Japan—to be suitably countered as soon as possible in the interests of German trade in the Far East, the promotion of which had been one of the Mission's principal tasks.

Field Marshal von Blomberg showed complete understanding of the situation as described by me and for the request submitted, and stated that the Reich War Ministry would observe the following principles in connexion with the further implementation of the Klein treaty:

1. The overseas firms are to be informed in a suitable fashion, e.g. by means of a discussion with Colonel Thomas<sup>2</sup>, about the treaty and its implementation.
2. In connexion with exports to China, Hapro will confine itself to armaments deliveries and a few special supplies—e.g. for opening up deposits of ore—only, and leave all other exports to the firms.
3. In connexion with exports from China to Germany, the cooperation of all firms is wholly desirable in the interests of supplying Germany's raw material requirements.

<sup>1</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 782.

<sup>2</sup> Chief of the Economic Defence Staff in the War Ministry.

Field Marshal von Blomberg added, in answer to a question of mine, that the organization of the German Military Advisers as existing hitherto was not to be altered and that Hapro was in future to work in the closest consultation with General von Falkenhausen. As regards the repercussions of the agreement on Japan, he had, moreover, had an exhaustive conversation some little while ago with the Japanese Military Attaché<sup>3</sup> and had informed both the Foreign Minister and Colonel-General Göring.<sup>4</sup>

In an ensuing conversation, Colonel Thomas promised to convene an interdepartmental conference, with restricted attendance, immediately, in order to prepare for the meeting with the firms. I pointed out in this connexion that I had postponed reporting in Hamburg and elsewhere on the Mission's journey until October, since the Klein treaty would occupy a central position in these discussions and I must have clear instructions on language to be held in this connexion.

Herewith submitted to:

Ministerialdirektor Ritter  
Geheimrat Benzler  
Minister von Erdmannsdorf  
Counsellor Knoll.

KIEP

<sup>3</sup> Gen. Oshima.

<sup>4</sup> No other record of such communications has been found.

## No. 538

1224/333594-96

### *The Minister in Yugoslavia to the Foreign Ministry*

2396 Po. 19

BELGRADE, September 15, 1936.

Pol. V 3580.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Yugoslavia's attitude to Soviet Russia and Communism.

It may seem paradoxical that of all the States of the Little Entente precisely that in which the Serbs are politically dominant should be the one which is politically the most hostile to present-day Russia and which, in fact, has not even entered into diplomatic relations with that State which, throughout Serbian history, has played the part of the great protector of the Slavs. Even when one considers that the Czechs in their fear of Germany and the Rumanians in their very fear of their Russian neighbour believe that they have urgent cause to possess good relations with the Soviet Republic, whilst Yugoslavia—further

removed from the line of fire—does not at present regard the question of her relations with the Slav Great Power as in any way vital, there nevertheless remains a certain inner contradiction in this marked Yugoslavian aloofness. For Yugoslavia's more than chilly attitude towards Soviet Russia does not derive from any ideological conviction on the part of the population clearly recognizing the dangers of Communism, but in the main from inhibitions, connected with internal policy and coloured by emotion, on the part of those persons who are today responsible for Yugoslav foreign policy.

There are, certainly, circles in Yugoslavia which regard Communism as a fatal malady, but the great majority of the population is indifferent to Marxist ideology, if not, indeed, favourably disposed towards it, and for them "Mother Russia" is even now the Great Power whose vocation it is to protect the Slavs. This applies in the first place to the Serbs, whilst amongst the Croats and Slovenes the influence of the Catholic clergy is still to some extent nullifying the propaganda put out by Moscow under the guise of pan-Slavism. If, therefore, public opinion in Yugoslavia were decisive for the conduct of that country's foreign policy, Yugoslavia's relations with Soviet Russia would probably have become normal long since. This fact may one day prove of great importance in the future development of Yugoslav foreign policy.

At the moment it is insignificant, for today Yugoslav foreign policy, and in particular Yugoslavia's attitude towards Soviet Russia, is dictated not by public opinion but solely by the views of those called upon to lead the State, Prince Regent Paul as well as the Minister President and Foreign Minister, Stojadinović. It may therefore be of interest to analyse in more detail the attitude of these two personages to present-day Russia and the world-wide threat of Communism.

Prince Regent Paul, the son of a former Imperial Russian officer and a Russian princess, is, for a start, hostile to the present rulers of Russia for emotional reasons; but intellectually too he is able to appreciate to the full the danger which radiates from Moscow. Developments in France are causing him grave concern, and Britain's under-estimate of the Communist danger receives sharp criticism from him, although he tends otherwise to admire all that is British. He sees in the new Germany a bulwark against Communism and if only for this reason he genuinely admires the Führer's work. The Prince Regent not only propounds this sane and far-sighted political attitude in his own country but has also repeatedly and very plainly propounded it in London, Paris and Bucharest.

These political opinions of the Prince Regent's do not conflict with those of his Minister President and Foreign Minister. But in Stojadinović's case they are based neither on emotional nor ideological considerations but are the product of opportunist calculation. His recipe

for internal policy is "economic expansion". His method in internal affairs is authoritarian rule cloaked in liberal and democratic phrases, and flexible adjustment to the changing needs of any particular internal distribution of power. His sceptical nature tends to take nothing really seriously, neither the Communist tendencies in his own country, which he sees merely as the inevitable but passing consequence of economic stagnation, nor Soviet Russia's world-wide propaganda. On the other hand, he is far from cherishing pan-Slav emotions. Thus he finds the thesis, vigorously propounded by the Minister of the Interior, M. Korošec,<sup>1</sup> that from the point of view of domestic politics, a Soviet Russian Mission in Belgrade would be undesirable as being a centre of Communist propaganda, sufficient for consistently refusing the resumption of diplomatic relations with Russia which is being demanded by many quarters. This is made all the easier for him by the fact that in contemporary Russia he sees no economic factor of significance for his country, whereas it is precisely Russia's chief opponent, the German Reich, which he regards as a virtually indispensable customer of Yugoslavia's.

Thus today Yugoslavia's political attitude to Communist propaganda in general and to Soviet Russia in particular is based on very shaky foundations. Nevertheless, those personages who are at present responsible for directing Yugoslav policy afford a certain guarantee that Yugoslavia will pay no heed to Russian blandishments in the foreseeable future.

VON HEEREN<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Anton Korošec, leader of the Slovene Populists (Slovene Clericals) and President of the National Federation of Cooperative Societies.

<sup>2</sup> Copies of this despatch were circulated by the Foreign Ministry on Sept. 25 to the Missions in Moscow, Bucharest, Budapest, Sofia, Prague and Warsaw, for information (1224/333597).

## No. 539

1584/382481-83

### *Ambassador Papen to Reich Chancellor Hitler*

VIENNA, September 15, 1936.

Rk. 12240 B.

MY FÜHRER: The League of Nations Delegate for Austria, M. Rost v. Tonningen, has requested me to convey to you his most cordial thanks for the invitation to Nuremberg. Everything that he has seen and heard there has made the most profound impression on him.

He has further asked me to seek an audience of you for the leader of the Dutch National Socialist Party, M. Mussert, in the second half of



October. I should be grateful if I could be informed of your decision on this audience, which could perhaps take place at Obersalzberg and which I warmly recommend, so that I can send it on.<sup>1</sup>

I did not want to trouble you, my Führer, at Nuremberg, in view of the vast number of engagements which you had to fulfil. I am convinced that the arousing of the world's conscience against the Bolshevik menace will bear rich fruit. I hope that you yourself will get as much rest as possible in the peace of Obersalzberg. At the same time I beg to report that I am today going on leave, as authorized.

Your faithful follower,

FRANZ PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "1) The Führer is prepared in principle to receive M. Mussert, but is at present not yet able to decide whether this will already be possible in the second half of October. 2) To Herr Min[isterial] Dirig[ent] Dr. Meerwald: Please draft a letter to Herr von Papen accordingly. Berchtesgaden, Sept. 30, 1936, L[ammers].” Lammers' letter to Papen of Oct. 1 is not printed (1584/382484); a minute attached to it (1584/382485) reads: "1) M. Mussert was received by the Führer and Chancellor on November 16, 1936. 2) To be filed. M[eerwal]d, Nov. 21." No record of Hitler's conversation with Mussert has been found.

## No. 540

1895/426625

### *The Ambassador in Austria to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL  
No. 118 of September 16

VIENNA, September 16, 1936—1:10 p.m.  
Received September 16—3:15 p.m.  
Pol. IV 3029.

For the Führer and Chancellor.

During his today's visit the Yugoslav Minister<sup>1</sup> told me the following:

On the occasion of the meeting of the Little Entente which took place at Bratislava,<sup>2</sup> Beneš, at the instigation of the French Government, proposed a defensive alliance between France and the States members of the Little Entente, this alliance to be directed against Germany.<sup>3</sup> This proposal was frustrated by the Yugoslav Minister President, Stojadinović. There was passed a resolution<sup>4</sup> reaffirming the *status quo* with regard to relations among the member States within the Little Entente in respect of foreign policy.

PAPEN

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<sup>1</sup> Djordje Nastasijević.

<sup>2</sup> Sept. 13-14.

<sup>3</sup> Information about this meeting, obtained from the Czechoslovak Foreign Minister, Krofta, was reported by Eisenlohr in a despatch, A V 15 of Sept. 18 from Prague (1895/426626-38); this despatch was made an enclosure to the Foreign Ministry's circular giving information on the meeting of the Little Entente (Pol. IV 3245 of Oct. 16 (1895/426657-61)).

<sup>4</sup> For the text of the communiqué issued at the end of the meeting of the Permanent Council of the Little Entente see *Documents on International Affairs 1936*, pp. 351-354.

## No. 541

1872/423782-85

*Circular of the Acting State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

Drafting Officer:

Counsellor Schmieden

BERLIN, September 16, 1936-8:45 p.m.

e.o. Pol. I 2118.

In the past few days Germany's attitude towards the British suggestion for convening the proposed Five Power conference in the second half of October has been represented in a large part of the foreign press as though Germany wished to sabotage this conference. It is being stated either that we are refusing to go to London at all or that we have made it a condition that Russia should not take part in the negotiations even at a later stage.

For your information and for guidance on language to be held, I set out below the course the matter has taken since July:

Following the communiqué of the remaining Locarno Powers of July 23,<sup>2</sup> the general invitation to take part in a Five Power Conference about a Western Pact was sent to us.<sup>3</sup> We at once took up the idea in a positive manner and already within a week of the invitation being conveyed to us we made known, on July 31,<sup>4</sup> our agreement in principle to taking part in such a conference. At the same time, as a condition for our participation, we pointed to the necessity for thorough diplomatic preparation for the conference in question. This was expressed in all diplomatic conversations which took place on the subject, not only in Berlin with the diplomats here concerned—as well as between the Foreign Minister and Sir Robert Vansittart<sup>5</sup>—but also in the four other capitals concerned. In making thorough diplomatic preparations a condition for our participation, we were moved only by the desire to ensure complete success for the conference. Our interlocutors, including Vansittart, and, in a conversation with Prince Bismarck, the acting Under Secretary of State in the Foreign Office, Sir Alexander Cadogan,<sup>6</sup> shared our opinion as to the necessity for thorough preparation. Cadogan, in addition, mentioned that the British Government, probably at the beginning of September, would approach the other Powers in order to bring about a technical exchange of views.

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Warsaw, Moscow, Washington, Tokyo, Tarabaya, Paris, London, Rome, Brussels, Prague, Belgrade, Bucharest, Vienna, Budapest, The Hague, Copenhagen, Oslo, Stockholm, Helsinki, Berne, Tallinn, Riga and Kovno.

<sup>2</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>3</sup> On July 24; see document No. 474, and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 489.

<sup>5</sup> See *ibid.*, footnotes 1 and 5.

<sup>6</sup> Bismarck reported on this conversation in airgram No. 176 of Aug. 25 (5948/E437711-12).

Instead of this, Sir Robert Vansittart, on September 9, sent for Prince Bismarck and asked him to transmit to the Reich Government a suggestion from the British Government that the proposed Five Power Conference should take place in London in the second half of October.<sup>7</sup> He said he had already conveyed the same suggestion to the representatives of France, Italy and Belgium. We were as much surprised by Sir Robert Vansittart's communication as were the Italian<sup>8</sup> and Belgian Governments.<sup>9</sup> Prince Bismarck was accordingly instructed to make it perfectly clear to Vansittart that we were certainly still prepared to take part in the Five Power Conference,<sup>10</sup> but that it was quite impossible for us to express any views on a definite date for holding the conference as long as the outcome of the diplomatic advance preparations—which had not yet even been begun—could not be foreseen. On the contrary, the preparations must first be so far advanced that the conference itself gave promise of success. Vansittart took note of this information and reserved his reply.<sup>11</sup> Beyond emphasizing our views as to the need for thorough preparation, Prince Bismarck made no other observations to Vansittart, in particular nothing whatever was said by either party about the question of the inclusion or otherwise of Russia in the negotiations. All press reports to the contrary are only intended to make us responsible from the outset for any postponement or abandonment of the conference. By contrast, our attitude on the procedure is clear; as emerges from statements by the Italian and Belgian Foreign Ministers, it is shared by their Governments.

As far as the subject of the conference is concerned it has firstly been established that the five participating Powers wish to negotiate about a new Western Pact to take the place of the old Locarno Pact. With this unambiguous definition of the task, the question of including Russia cannot arise at all.

Addition for the Legation in Berne: You should inform Geneva as well.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>7</sup> See document No. 530.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 533.

<sup>9</sup> In telegram No. 52 of Sept. 14 (3618/E027256-57) Richthofen reported on a conversation with Spaak, the Belgian Foreign Minister, in this sense.

<sup>10</sup> See document No. 532 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>11</sup> Bismarck reported on this conversation in Airgram No. 185 of Sept. 11 (5948/E-437713-14).

## No. 542

6801/E515660-65

*The Head of the Aussenpolitisches Amt of the NSDAP to the Führer and Chancellor*

BERLIN, September 16, 1936.

MY FÜHRER: I beg to enclose the minutes<sup>1</sup> of the conversation between Major Dutton and myself, which has already been reported to you.

At the same time, Counsellor Schmidt, in conjunction with my staff, has revised and improved, in the light of his shorthand record, Major Dutton's notes on what you said concerning the colonial problem at the reception in Nuremberg<sup>2</sup>. I submit them for your approval. Major Dutton is staying in Berlin until tomorrow, and I would like to hand him his notes direct and avoid sending them by post. In order that no misunderstandings may arise, I would ask you to look through Enclosure I and approve it.

Heil, my Führer!

A. ROSENBERG

[Enclosure]

I

*Exact translation of Major Dutton's notes on the Führer's remarks regarding the colonial question, at the reception of the British guests with Reichsleiter Rosenberg in the "Deutscher Hof" during the Party Conference in Nuremberg, revised and improved by Counsellor Schmidt in the light of his shorthand record.*

The Führer stated that the colonial question, as far as Germany was concerned, was not a matter of prestige. Various reasons for this question had been spoken of: prestige, military and economic reasons. He would deal with each of these points individually and in turn, and at the same time he would take the opportunity of expounding his policy with regard to the colonial problem.

He wished above all to make it absolutely clear that he was not demanding colonies for reasons of prestige. Germany did not need colonial possessions in order to be great, and this, he was sure, would also be his British guests' impression of the Germany of today. He quoted Russia as an example, a powerful country without colonial

<sup>1</sup> Not found; these minutes were presumably marked as Enclosure II.

<sup>2</sup> This presumably took place on Sept. 9; cf. footnote 3 below.



possessions. He could not therefore give prestige as a reason for regaining colonies.

Furthermore, it had, he continued, been asserted that Germany was demanding colonies for military reasons. In the first place, it was, he said, by no means certain that colonial possessions would increase Germany's military power, given the geographical position. What, he asked, had been the fate of the German colonies in the war? Germany had lost almost all her colonies immediately after the outbreak of war. He fully realized that Germany was in a far more difficult situation than Britain, France or Italy should she wish to defend her colonies in time of war. If only for this reason, military interests could never underlie the German demand. But there was, he added, another point. Some people believed that Germany was claiming colonies in order to recruit black troops. He must reject this contention most emphatically. He was bitterly opposed to the employment of black troops to fight white troops. This had long been the basis of his policy. The employment of black troops against white ran utterly counter to all his ideals. He would come back later to the question of protecting any colonies that might be given back. This belonged with his proposals regarding the distribution of spheres of power.

There remained the economic reasons. His guests had heard his statement during the morning<sup>3</sup> (i.e., that some rather limited British statesman had said that, if Germany needed raw materials, they were available in the world market and could be bought there, a view which had reminded the Führer of a remark of Marie Antoinette's that if the people could not buy bread they should eat cake). In saying this, he [had] wanted to make it clear that Germany needed raw materials but could not buy them. And there was no substitute for the raw materials which she needed most urgently. He was seizing every possible opportunity of drawing attention to this fact.

England had a population of 137 people per square kilometre; in Germany there were 136 people per square kilometre. If England were to lose her colonies, how would she then feed her population? And could it be supposed that Germany was in a better position to solve this problem, with only one human being less per square kilometre than England? If England had happened to discover any way of feeding her population in spite of insufficient raw materials, he could only say: "Please send me this recipe!"

Here he would like to draw attention to the difference between the economic situation of Germany at the beginning of the war and the situation when he assumed power, namely, the economic situation

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<sup>3</sup> Presumably a reference to the Führer's proclamation read at the opening session of the Party Rally on Sept. 9.

which he was actually facing. Before the beginning of the war, Germany possessed within Germany herself a reserve of  $9\frac{1}{2}$  thousand million Marks (in gold and foreign currency), and 25 thousand million Marks in investments, etc., abroad. When he assumed power, these figures had sunk to 81 million Marks (gold and foreign currency) and the capital abroad was entirely lost. Everything they had possessed abroad in the form of investments, etc., had gone in reparation payments. He asked how, in view of these facts, he could be in a position to buy raw materials. His guests would appreciate that the view of that British statesman whom he had mentioned that morning was not really very profound. No foreign currencies were at his disposal for the purchase of raw materials. He could not emphasize this plainly enough. During the years since he had assumed power, he had rendered Germany 85 per cent self-supporting. This, he must add, was the result of unparalleled efforts and achievements by the German people. For the remaining 15 per cent, he needed, as raw materials, oils and fats and, to a much lesser extent, coffee, tea and tobacco. He himself had long since entirely given up coffee, tea and tobacco, but even though he himself had done so, he could not expect the whole German people to follow him in this respect. He must therefore demand colonies. By means of colonial possessions he could satisfy 10 per cent of this deficiency.

He was not, however, demanding this or that colony back; he was viewing the problem from a much wider aspect. He would gladly negotiate about this problem on the basis of reciprocal cooperation, namely, on the basis of a closer understanding with Great Britain. He had tried again and again to establish these friendly relations. This was the basis of his policy, which he had advocated long before he assumed power.

They must learn to realize that this was not solely a matter of the colonial problem. It must be borne in mind that the welfare of Germany (and for this she needed raw materials) was closely bound up with the colonial question, as was also the safeguarding of Europe against the onslaught of Bolshevism, and, too, the common efforts in their various areas of influence. Every time he raised the colonial problem with his English friends, they suggested that he should first speak to the French. Whenever he talked to the French about it, the latter asked: "But what does England think?" Recently, however, they had both joined forces and were answering in chorus: "How about going to someone else for your colonies?" Well, he was raising no claims to the possessions of others; nor had he any money to buy them. He was therefore hoping for a discussion by virtue of which the colonial problem could be solved in conjunction with the larger question of European security and good European government.

The Führer repeated that on countless occasions he had stretched out the hand of friendship to England but had very often been disappointed. He hoped all the more that now, at a time when the state of affairs in Europe was so threatened, the hand of friendship would finally be grasped.

He based his demand for colonies simply and solely on pure necessity, but the discrimination (the clause stating that the colonies were being taken away from Germany because she had demonstrated her incompetence to administer them) was unjust—and everybody knew that now—and because this was the case it gave him the right to broach this question. He must constantly remind his guests not to forget that the colonial question was only a part of the great questions on which the future of world peace depended. And this after all was reason enough for putting the question forward.

*Notes.*—The danger of the exceedingly small margin on which Germany's adequate self-support is dependent every year.

No imperialism, but a question of the most vital necessity.

No disturbance of the strategic lines of communication of the British Empire. On the contrary, the desire to avoid this by all means in his power.

## No. 543

1425/362791

### *The Head of the European Section of the Political Department to the Legation in Belgium*

Telegram

No. 108

BERLIN, September 17, 1936.

Received September 17.

With reference to our despatch Pol. I [*sic*] 17 52/2 of September 8.<sup>1</sup> Reich Minister Goebbels is prepared to receive [the visitor], as requested,<sup>2</sup> during the period up to October 3 and after October 15 in Berlin.<sup>3</sup>

WOERMANN

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 527, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 527.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Bräuer's handwriting: "Amended by telephone [from] 'Oct. 1' to 'Oct. 3' and after 'Oct. 15'."

## No. 544

6976/E521116

*Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, September 17, 1936.

Pol. I 2259.

The American Ambassador called on me today and enquired first of all whether there was any foundation for the anxiety about war felt by many Americans who were travelling in Europe at present and who had spoken to him on their way through Berlin. I told the Ambassador it must be apparent to him from all responsible German statements that we were determined if at all possible to maintain peace and that, therefore, we on our side were at any rate not occasioning any danger of war. Nor did the Nuremberg speeches,<sup>1</sup> to which Mr. Dodd alluded, contain anything whatever involving Germany's having offensive and war-like designs. The Ambassador then asked whether the German Government were still ready to collaborate in a general limitation of armaments and stated in confidence that it was possible that President Roosevelt, whose re-election was as good as certain, would approach the Powers in the course of November or December with a suggestion for a general disarmament conference. Mr. Dodd asked how such a suggestion from the American President might be expected to be received in Germany. In reply I told the Ambassador that it was naturally impossible to fix today the attitude of the German Government to a hypothetical case in the future, but that I took it that the principles laid down by the Führer in his speech of May 21, 1935,<sup>2</sup> on the limitation of armaments, still applied. According to this, the plan for a limitation of armaments could only have prospects of success if it were really binding on all the States concerned and, furthermore, if it did not contain exaggerated demands but proceeded step by step, more or less on the lines the Führer had indicated in his afore-mentioned speech. After the unfortunate experiences the world had been through with the Geneva Disarmament Conference, which had dragged on for years with total lack of success, a new disarmament or armaments limitation plan would have to be drawn up with special care. The Ambassador seemed to appreciate this.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>1</sup> Made at the Nuremberg Party Rally, held Sept. 9-14.

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.



## No. 545

3815/E043170-77

*The Chargé d'Affaires in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

4309

ROME, September 17, 1936

Received September 19.

Pol. II 1927.

Subject: Anglo-Italian Relations.

The King of England's tour in the Mediterranean<sup>1</sup> has been followed here with great attention; it has not caused much pleasure. I hear that the King's visits to Yugoslavia, Greece and Turkey, i.e., to the very countries with which Britain had previously concluded naval agreements against Italy,<sup>2</sup> is regarded in the Foreign Ministry here as evidence that Britain is determined to continue to pursue a Mediterranean policy directed against Italy. According to reports from Ambassador Grandi,<sup>3</sup> however, the King himself is favourably disposed to a *rapprochement* with Italy, but the fact that on this occasion he did not visit Italy shows that he is compelled to cooperate in the anti-Italian policy of the British Cabinet.

The visit of the Turkish fleet to Malta which has been announced, the projected visit by Kemal<sup>4</sup> to London, the Turkish Foreign Minister's<sup>5</sup> journey to Geneva *via Athens*, the news of an impending Turkish-Egyptian understanding, the agreements concerning the Suez Canal in the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty<sup>6</sup>—all these are facts which, according to my informant, the Palazzo Chigi construes in an anti-Italian sense. Furthermore, Britain's marked complaisance *vis-à-vis* Egypt and Turkey is held to show that she wishes, even at the price of sacrifices, to develop her friendly relations with the countries in the Eastern Mediterranean with the object of being able, if necessary, to cut Italy's lines of communication through the Suez Canal and the Dardanelles

<sup>1</sup> Edward VIII left London on Aug. 7 for a cruise in the Mediterranean, during which he visited Austria, Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, Greece and Turkey; he returned to England on Sept. 14.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the assurances of reciprocal support exchanged between Britain, France, Greece, Turkey and Yugoslavia in the event of hostilities breaking out through the application of sanctions against Italy; see British White Paper, Cmd. 5072 of 1936, *Dispute between Ethiopia and Italy, Correspondence in connection with the application of Article 16 of the Covenant of the League of Nations, January 1936*.

<sup>3</sup> Italian Ambassador in London.

<sup>4</sup> Kemal Atatürk, President of Turkey.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Tewfik Rüşti Aras.

<sup>6</sup> For the text of the Anglo-Egyptian Treaty of Alliance of Aug. 26, 1936, and the attached agreements, see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5360 of 1936. The "Agreements on the Suez Canal" are included in Article 8 of the Treaty, and in the "Agreed Minute" and the Convention on the immunities and privileges to be enjoyed by British forces in Egypt, also signed in London on Aug. 26, 1936.

(oil supplies from Rumania). The final British objective is thought to be to compel Italy to conclude a Mediterranean Pact in which Italy would have little say and would find herself isolated in the face of a strong coalition led by Britain.

PLESSEN

## No. 546

2558/523892-95

### *The Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram

No. 191 of September 18

LONDON, September 18, 1936.

Received September 19—6:45 a.m.

Pol. I 2157.

Foreign Secretary Eden asked me to call on him today in the late afternoon after he had already received the Belgian,<sup>1</sup> French<sup>2</sup> and Italian Ambassadors.<sup>3</sup> Eden opened our conversation by saying that he wanted to repeat once again the view which, as he said, the British side too had more than once expressed in diplomatic conversations, namely, that the British Government considered a thorough diplomatic preparation of the Five Power conference to be necessary. He was saying this because he had the feeling that certain misunderstandings in this connexion had been aroused by the British proposal to hold the conference at the end of October.<sup>4</sup> I replied that we in Germany had certainly been surprised that, after Cadogan had told me on August 25<sup>5</sup> that the British Government would probably take the initiative in starting diplomatic preparations, the next communication from the British Government to us had merely consisted of an enquiry about setting a date for the conference. Eden replied that this was in part due to his absence from the Foreign Office through sickness, and went on to say that the British Government had now decided to open diplomatic discussions; he had therefore asked me to call on him, as he had the other representatives of the Powers concerned, in order to give us a Memorandum which would represent the first step in this direction. Eden then handed to me the Memorandum of which a copy is annexed, which I read through in his presence and on the contents of which he made the following detailed remarks:

As I would see from the opening sentence, a firm date for the conference was not proposed, only the hope expressed that agreement could

<sup>1</sup> Baron de Cartier de Marchienne.

<sup>2</sup> André Charles Corbin.

<sup>3</sup> Dino Grandi.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 530.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 541, footnote 6.

be reached on as early a date as possible. Paragraph 2 was purely a condensed version of the text of the London Communiqué of July 23<sup>6</sup> whose details he had explained to me in our conversation of July 24 (cf. my telegram No. 149 of July 24).<sup>7</sup> Paragraph 3 recalled the necessity emphasized by all sides including the British Government for careful diplomatic preparation, while Paragraph 4 raised various questions which in the British Government's view must form the subject of the discussions. In Paragraph 5 the British Government advanced their own views, albeit in general and provisional terms, on the questions mentioned in Paragraph 4. He wished to draw my attention to the fact that it was of course only a matter of proposals designed to set discussions in train and that in all questions where doubt subsisted, or in the case of there being differing views on the questions concerned, the several Governments would be requested to put the most extensive questions or to put forward the fullest counter-proposals.

On point 1 of Paragraph 5, Eden said that the substance of this point closely followed the old Locarno Treaty.<sup>8</sup> I drew his attention to the reference included there to Article 2 of the Locarno Treaty, which, as was known, contained provisions on the demilitarized zone which would in future of course no longer apply. Eden replied that in place of the reference to Article 2, it had originally been intended to include in the memorandum as an "exception" simply "the exercise of the right of self-defence". Later, however, they had after all included reference to Article 2 of the old Locarno Treaty, though purposely leaving open all details, by saying "certain exceptions on the lines".<sup>9</sup> In order, however, to go more closely into the question, Eden asked Cadogan to come in and bring the text of the Locarno Treaty, and I pointed out to him that section 1 of Article 2, at least in so far as it referred to Articles 42 and 43 of the Versailles Treaty, naturally no longer applied. The same could be said of Article 1 of the Locarno Treaty in so far as mention was there made of the two aforesaid Articles of the Versailles Treaty. Eden admitted this at once, regretted that the text of the memorandum was not entirely clear on this point and criticized this to Cadogan. I further referred to section 3 of Article 2 and said that it seemed doubtful to me whether the Reich Government would, without more ado, agree to the exception there set forth. Eden repeated once again that it was precisely these questions which should form the subject of the diplomatic conversations. On the proposal that the question of a violation of the non-aggression obligation should be submitted to the League of Nations Council, Eden said that, as far

<sup>6</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>7</sup> Document No. 477.

<sup>8</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1.

<sup>9</sup> This phrase in quotation marks is in English in the original.



as he could remember, the Reich Government had proposed putting the Hague Court of Arbitration in the place of the League Council. Here too it was, of course, open to Germany to develop her own ideas.

Eden brought our conversation to an end by expressing the hope that the Reich Government would soon find themselves in a position to answer the British memorandum and added that he requested that the memorandum be treated as confidential, as they had no intention of publishing it in any circumstances.

I would add that our conversation dealt exclusively with the projected Western Pact and that no mention at all was made of the reference, taken over from the Communiqué of July 23 and included in Paragraph 2 of the Memorandum, to questions going beyond this and to a general European settlement.

BISMARCK

3317/E007761-63

[Enclosure]<sup>10</sup>

#### MEMORANDUM

His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom have the honour to put forward the following suggestions as to the scope of the discussion which it is hoped to initiate in London between the Five Locarno Powers at the earliest date that may be agreed between them.

2. It will be recalled that in the words of the London Communiqué of July 23rd, 1936, the first business to be undertaken at such a meeting was to be the negotiation of a new agreement to take the place of the Treaty of Locarno and to resolve, through the collaboration of all concerned, the situation created by the German initiative of the 7th March. The Communiqué continued that if progress could be made at this meeting, other matters affecting European peace would necessarily come under discussion. In these circumstances it would be natural to look forward to the widening of the area of the discussion in such a manner as to facilitate, with the collaboration of the other interested Powers, the settlement of those problems the solution of which is essential to the peace of Europe.

3. On July 31st both the German and Italian Governments pointed out that this Conference would require the most careful diplomatic preparation.<sup>11</sup> His Majesty's Government entirely share this view and they are inclined to think that, arising in particular out of the discussion of the proposed agreement to replace the Locarno Treaty, there are [a] number of points to which the attention of the five Governments might

<sup>10</sup> This enclosure is in English in the original.

<sup>11</sup> See document No. 489 and footnote 3 thereto.



well be now directed and which might profitably be discussed by them, in advance of the meeting, through the diplomatic channel.

4. Though the following list must certainly not be regarded as in any way exhaustive, these points seem to His Majesty's Government to be as follows:

(1) What is to be the form of the new agreement to take the place of the Treaty of Locarno, i.e. will it include (a) non-aggression arrangement between certain Powers and, if so, between which Powers, and (b) provisions guaranteeing those non-aggression arrangements, and, if so, which Powers will give and receive the guarantees and how will they operate?

(2) Will it be necessary to make special provision in the new agreement for air attack?

(3) Should the new agreement contain provision for arbitration and conciliation as does the Treaty of Locarno?

5. On these points the views of His Majesty's Government are, generally and provisionally, as follows:

(1) His Majesty's Government assume that the new agreement will include certain non-aggression arrangements, whereby the participants would agree in no case to attack or invade each other by land, sea or air, or to resort to war against each other, subject to certain exception on the lines which were laid down in Article 2 of the Treaty of Locarno. His Majesty's Government would be ready to guarantee the observance of such arrangements as between Germany on the one hand and France and Belgium on the other in return for similar guarantees for the United Kingdom from France against Germany and from Germany against France. The question whether the above non-aggression undertaking has been violated should in the opinion of His Majesty's Government be submitted to the Council of the League of Nations. In the case of a flagrant violation of a frontier, the guarantees might operate immediately, as in the Treaty of Locarno, pending a final pronouncement by the Council.

(2) His Majesty's Government consider that special provision should be made in the guarantee arrangements under the new agreement for immediate assistance in the event of an air attack which constituted a violation of the non-aggression undertakings. If this is done, a separate Air Pact would not, in their opinion be necessary.

(3) His Majesty's Government suggest that the new agreement should contain provisions for arbitration and conciliation as did the Treaty of Locarno, and for their part they would be ready to agree to such provisions.

6. His Majesty's Government would be glad to receive either in writing or orally, the observations of the German Government on these and any other points which they may think it useful to mention.

7. A similar communication has been made to the Belgian, French and Italian Governments.

Foreign Office, S.W.1.

17th September, 1936

No. 547

2558/523889-91

*Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Foreign Minister Neurath*

BERLIN, September 19, 1936.

DEAR FOREIGN MINISTER: As arranged, I venture to enclose a copy of Bismarck's report on his conversation with Eden yesterday, together with a copy of the British Note on the Five Power Conference.<sup>1</sup> To make it easier to understand I enclose the text of the old Rhine Pact<sup>2</sup> to which the British Note repeatedly makes reference.

My first impression is that the British Note contains nothing surprising, but that it raises all the technical problems which we had always expected.

With regard to the programme and the composition of the conference, the British Note keeps entirely within the framework of the invitation previously addressed to us. I believe that in this respect our attitude is fairly simple. In my view it is not necessary or even advisable for us now to place the main emphasis of the whole discussion on the fact that we would in no case agree to the inclusion of Soviet Russia or to making any pacts with her. The British Note in no way requires this of us, even though privately the British are naturally thinking of extending the discussions to Eastern questions later on. As matters stand at present it would, in my opinion, suffice if we, on our part, were to emphasize that only after agreement has been reached about a new Western Pact, will it be possible to foresee what further problems should be brought up for discussion and that, therefore, in this respect, we must reserve full freedom of action.

On the other hand we must at once be clear on the following fundamental problems which are bound up with the Western Pact itself and which are raised directly in the British Note:

(1) On the question of whether we wish to concede to the French an exception from the mutual renunciation of war which would make it possible for them to maintain to the previous extent their familiar treaties of alliance, in particular their Pact with Soviet Russia;

(2) On the question of whether the new Western Pact, like the old Rhine Pact, should be linked with the League of Nations, which, of

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 546 and enclosure thereto.

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted. See Editors' Note, page 1.

course, leads to the further question of whether the return of Germany to the League of Nations should already be envisaged in the Western Pact;

(3) On the question of whether and, if so, what guarantee obligations Germany, on her part, should undertake.

On the first question, the British for their part have, for the moment, adroitly got out of the affair by saying that the exceptions from the mutual renunciation of war to be laid down in the Western Pact would most usefully be "on the lines which were laid down in Article 2 of the Treaty of Locarno".<sup>3</sup>

On the second question, the British advocate linking the Western Pact with the League of Nations because in their view the Council of the League should, as in the Rhine Pact, be the authoritative international body.

With regard to the third question, it is extremely interesting that Britain desires a guarantee in her favour only as far as the relationship between Germany, France and Britain is concerned, that is to say, not in relation to Italy. In this way we get over the difficult question of whether we, on our part, could have promised a German guarantee in the case of an Anglo-Italian conflict as well.

For convenience, I enclose a copy of the memorandum, previously drawn up, on the questions connected with the Western Pact,<sup>4</sup> which in its essential points is still of interest in view of the British Note.

If I view the situation aright, the main thing now for us is to obtain a general line of policy concerning the three basic problems of the Western Pact set out above. Only when we know what this line of policy is to be will it be possible to get in touch with the Italians, as we promised them we would do before replying to the British. Nor shall we be able usefully to tackle the detailed work on the British project until such a line of policy has been laid down.

DIECKHOFF

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<sup>3</sup> In English in the original.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 515, enclosure.

## No. 548

408/215109-13

*Foreign Minister Neurath to the Führer and Chancellor*<sup>1</sup>BUDAPEST,<sup>2</sup> September 20, 1936.

DEAR REICH CHANCELLOR: I have received here this morning the Memorandum of the British Government<sup>3</sup> which initiates the diplomatic talks regarding the Five Power conference. From the enclosed telegram from Bismarck<sup>4</sup> regarding his conversation with Eden it emerges, first of all, that the British have dropped the demand to fix a date for beginning the conference.

As far as the contents of the Memorandum itself are concerned, one's first impression is that it contains nothing surprising but raises all the technical problems which we had expected. Since the inclusion of the Soviet Union, and possibly concluding pacts with them, is not mentioned in the British Note, it does not appear to me to be necessary at present for us to raise this question ourselves. It should suffice to say in our reply that only after agreement has been reached about a new Western Pact will it be possible to foresee what further problems should perhaps be brought up for discussion and that in this respect we must reserve full freedom of action. On the other hand, we shall not be able to avoid making up our minds, already at this stage, on the following fundamental problems which are bound up with the Western Pact itself and which are indeed raised directly in the British Note:

1. On the question of whether we wish to concede to the French an exception from the mutual renunciation of war which would make it possible for them to maintain, to the previous extent, their familiar treaties of alliance, in particular their Pact with Soviet Russia. In my opinion, there should be no question of our recognizing, as was done in the old Rhine Pact, the attitude which France has [now] adopted in her Pact with Soviet Russia. By so doing we would not only be denying the legal basis of our action in the Rhineland but would also, politically, be expressly legalizing the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance directed against Germany. Nor does it appear to me desirable again to make the provisions of the Western Pact dependent on the provisions of the

<sup>1</sup> This copy of the document here printed was sent by Neurath to Dieckhoff, under cover of a letter dated Sept. 20 (408/215108), which read: "Many thanks for your letter of the 19th [document No. 547], which Marchtaler brought me this morning. Enclosed I send you a copy of a letter which I have written to the Führer. I consider it desirable to give him at least a provisional review of the treatment of the British Memorandum in order to prevent him from perhaps committing himself too hastily in any one direction. I will then try to see the Chancellor as soon as possible, in order to discuss the whole complex [of questions] with him."

<sup>2</sup> Neurath arrived in Budapest on Sept. 19 for a private visit to his daughter, who was the wife of Mackensen, the German Minister there.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 546, and enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Of Sept. 18 (document No. 546).



League of Nations Covenant. Without wishing to express a final judgement in this respect already now, I could imagine that this difficulty could be met by making France's authority for military intervention against Germany, in case of conflict with a third country, dependent upon all parties to the Western Pact, other than France and Germany, declaring Germany to be the aggressor in this conflict. Whether France would reconcile herself to such a settlement cannot, of course, be foreseen. Or, perhaps, in the first stage of the diplomatic preparations we could entirely refrain from proposing a concrete solution and content ourselves with emphasizing that these problems are closely connected with the future shaping of the League of Nations, and that one must wait and see in what direction the efforts for this reform will develop.

2. On the question of whether the new Western Pact, like the old Rhine Pact, should be linked with the League of Nations, which would result in Germany's return to the League of Nations being already envisaged in the new Western Pact, it is my view that we should in all circumstances avoid prejudicing the question of our return to the League of Nations.

3. On the question of whether, and, if so, what guarantee obligations Germany on her part should undertake: In this respect it is interesting that Britain desires a guarantee in her favour only as far as the relationship between Germany, France and Britain is concerned, that is to say, not in relation to Italy. For the time being, therefore, we are spared the difficult question as to whether we on our part should promise a German guarantee for the case of an Anglo-Italian conflict as well. But I am by no means sure that the Italian side will not raise this question and also demand a guarantee.

It is also interesting that the British neither demand the conclusion of a special air pact nor revert to the question of the limitation of air armaments but content themselves with proposing, in case of an air attack, special provisions which function automatically.

The above are only a few observations which have occurred to me on a first reading of the British Memorandum. If I may, I shall go into more detail later at an oral discussion. For this purpose may I request you let me know where I could see you between the 24th and 26th of this month. I intend, at present, to be in Berlin again at midday on the 24th but I could also fly from here to Munich or Berchtesgaden should you so wish. As soon as we are clear about the main points, I propose to get into touch with the Italian Government in order to adopt a common course with them.

I am sending this letter this evening by special courier via Berlin.

I enclose a translation of the British Memorandum, and Bismarck's telegram of September 18.

With the greatest respect,

Yours etc.,

V. NEURATH

## No. 549

5644/H001058

*Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division V*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, September 21, 1936.

W IV OE 2168.

As, I hear from President Schacht, the Russian negotiators Kandelaki and Friedrichson will probably be received by Minister President Göring in the middle of this week for the continuation of the German-Russian economic negotiations. The discussions are apparently being resumed at the Russians' request.<sup>1</sup>

Herewith respectfully submitted to the State Secretary via Senior Counsellor Sabath.

VAN SCHERPENBERG

<sup>1</sup> No record of these discussions has been found. Scherpenberg was Schacht's son-in-law.

## No. 550

1941/434757-61

*Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, September 23, 1936.

Pol. IV 3286.

The Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires called on me today and handed me the attached *Note Verbale* in which he protests on instructions from his Government about remarks made in the speeches delivered at Nuremberg, on September 10, by Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels and Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg about Soviet Russian aid in Czechoslovakia (particularly airfields).

I rejected the Chargé d'Affaires' protest and told M. Schubert that this was a matter of one opinion against another; we had thus far had entirely reliable reports that a number of airfields had been constructed on Czechoslovak territory which were to serve as Soviet bases.<sup>1</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> Marginal notes: (i) "St[ate] S[ecretary]. The Note is to remain unanswered as it has already been verbally rejected. v. N[eurath], Sept. 24." (ii) "My minute of yesterday [containing draft reply (1941/434762-63)] is therefore superseded. W[eizsäcker], Sept. 25."

[Enclosure]

NOTE VERBALE

No. 683/36

BERLIN, September 21, 1936.

The Legation of the Czechoslovak Republic has the honour to draw the attention of the Foreign Ministry to the following matter:

On the occasion of the Party Rally of the NSDAP in Nuremberg,

Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels and Reichsleiter Alfred Rosenberg in their speeches of September 10 also spoke about the airfields alleged to have been constructed with Soviet Russian assistance in Czechoslovakia.

According to the text published in the *Völkischer Beobachter* dated September 11 last, Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels said in particular:

"It is no different as regards the military pact between Moscow and Prague. A Soviet airman and Communist party member made the following statements about it to a representative of the French newspaper *Guingoire* on December 15, 1935: 'The construction of air bases both in front of and behind Prague would be ideal for us. From there we could reduce flying time by half and would only need half as much fuel, which would enable us to carry three more tons of explosive.' In the meanwhile these Red airfields have been constructed on Czechoslovak territory in large numbers. They were recently increased to 36. The daily newspaper of the Czech Minister President, *Slovensky Dennik*, which is published in Bratislava, reveals with astonishing frankness the purpose of these Red air bases: 'If the airfields are needed for the country's defence, then we will certainly not pasture geese upon them. They will also serve every friend who is prepared to help us in our defence.' In other words, the Red bombers are to start their attack upon Europe from those 36 airfields.

"How acute is this menace emerges from the fact that the most important strategic points in Central Europe can be reached by the bombers of the Red air squadrons in less than an hour and destroyed. From the Red Army's air bases on Czechoslovak territory the following can for example be reached: Dresden in 20 minutes, Chemnitz in 11 minutes, the Silesian industrial area in 9 minutes, Berlin in 42 minutes, Vienna in 9 minutes, the arms factories in Steyr in 17 and the industrial area of Styria in 27 minutes, Budapest can even be laid in rubble and ashes within 6 minutes of take-off."

In the speech of Reichsleiter Rosenberg the following passage occurs:

"This is the purpose served by the Franco-Soviet-Jewish military pact and likewise the alliance with Czechoslovakia. On the latter's territory, with Russian assistance, approximately 170 landing fields have been constructed, of which 36 are airports which, under Bolshevik supervision, are intended to be the staging points for the onslaught upon Europe. And the Rumanian people are being led by every means of intimidation to imitate this example in order that Rumanian territory may serve as a region of military passage for the Soviet army, and that Bucharest will not protest when the flying hordes from Moscow fly over Rumania on their way to Czechoslovakia, the aircraft carrier of Soviet Judea."

Reports about Soviet Russian airfields in Czechoslovakia have already on several occasions been officially denied by the competent

Czechoslovak authorities.<sup>2</sup> The allegations that Czechoslovakia is secretly collaborating with any one State against another State or against several other States, or that she is constructing airfields or bases or the like on her soil with the assistance of, or on behalf of, any other State, do not accord with the facts. It has therefore occasioned surprise in Czechoslovakia that these allegations should now also have been repeated by a member of the Reich Government at the Reich Party Rally, where the Czechoslovak Chargé d'Affaires was present as a guest at the invitation of his Excellency the German Reich Chancellor.

On the instructions of their Government, the Czechoslovak Legation protest against such false allegations. The Czechoslovak Government absolutely refuse to permit any aggressive designs whatever, particularly against the German Reich, to be attributed to their policy or to a treaty, concluded by them, which envisages nothing other than support against unprovoked aggression.

The Czechoslovak Government also object to the proclivity to regard the Czechoslovak Republic as a State whose policy is dependent upon that of any other State. The Czechoslovak Government have always watched over the independence of their political decisions and have never signed treaties with any other State which were not based on the principle of strict reciprocity and the contractual equality of rights of the Contracting Parties.

The Czechoslovak Government consider therefore that they are entitled to expect that the Government of the German Reich will not refrain from redressing the injustice which has been done to the Czechoslovak State by the statements here quoted.

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2. See also documents Nos. 205 and 220, and vol. iv. of this series, document No. 580.

## No. 551

631/252240-51

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P V 21/9.36.

WARSAW, September 23, 1936.

Received September 26.

Pol. V 3785.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Results of Rydz-Smigly's journey to Paris.

Political Protocol.

Military Protocol.

Financial Protocol.

Evaluation.

It is difficult to obtain exact and detailed information here about the results of General Rydz-Smigly's journey to Paris.<sup>1</sup> The fullest

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<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 518 and 528, with footnote 4 thereto.



account of the results of the negotiations still remains the memorandum by the Soviet Russian Military Attaché<sup>2</sup> which Herr von Studnitz<sup>3</sup> has already submitted to the Foreign Ministry and which I again attach to this report as an enclosure. Judging by what has been learned here, it seems to be established that what this contains is an exact reproduction of information, based on French sources, reaching the Soviet Embassy here from Moscow. However, it must be borne in mind that presumably the French informants on whose statements the memorandum is based had already painted the results of the negotiations in optimistic colours, and that this optimistic colouring will probably have been considerably added to in Moscow with the obvious purpose of making the results appear as unfavourable to Germany as possible.

### *Political Protocol.*

This applies especially to the political part. In the first place it is doubtful whether any political protocol was signed at all. Count Szembek denied it most vigorously<sup>4</sup> in a conversation which I had with him today.<sup>5</sup> "*Il n'y a pas de papier politique*" [There is no political document]. Even though this phrase allows of the conclusion that written agreements exist for the other questions, yet the *démenti* with regard to the political protocol may well be true; this is also indicated by information available here from other sources. It would appear that, in any case, not three, but only one protocol was signed, which, however, falls into three parts: a military-political one, a technical military one, and a financial part; the military-political part allegedly only lays down the principle that the Alliance concluded between Poland and France in 1921<sup>6</sup> as well as the Treaties of 1923<sup>7</sup> and 1925 are to be strengthened.

The assumption that a political protocol was not signed has a good deal in its favour if only because the assertion in the Russian memorandum that, in this political protocol, Poland has undertaken the obligation to harmonize her foreign policy with the foreign policy of France sounds highly improbable. Indeed, one can scarcely imagine that Poland would have been prepared to abandon her freedom of political action. For years Pilsudski's endeavours were directed to releasing himself from French tutelage and to obtaining recognition for

<sup>2</sup> Col. Semiönov.

<sup>3</sup> Col. V. von Studnitz, German Military Attaché in Warsaw.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "So did Lipski."

<sup>5</sup> For Szembek's account of this conversation see Szembek: *Journal*, p. 204.

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 61, footnote 4.

<sup>7</sup> Evidently a reference to the military talks held between Marshal Foch and the Polish General Staff, in Warsaw, in May, 1923. The German Embassy in Warsaw reported on these talks in despatch K. No. 265 of May 9, 1923 (K 177/K 030274-76).

the principle that Poland must have the right to act solely in accordance with her own interests. Neither Foreign Minister Beck, with his constant concern for Poland's position as a Great Power, nor General Rydz-Smigly, the guardian of Pilsudski's legacy, can be thought capable—however great the desire for French gold for rearmament may be—of bartering away the hard-won political position. If indeed the notion of Poland adapting herself to French foreign policy were ever to be formulated in any shape at all, then it would certainly only be with the restriction that the preservation of Polish interests must be guaranteed. This restriction, however, would make the promise practically worthless.

Apart from this, Count Szembek has also emphasized most vigorously both to me and to other diplomats that no political concessions have been made and that they have rigidly adhered to the bilateral character of the Alliance. He pointed out in this connexion that the hitherto existing Treaty, too, contained an obligation to inform each other about political intentions, in so far as they concerned other countries, and that in future too no more far-reaching obligation would exist.

For reasons of practical policy, too, it is extremely unlikely that Poland should have promised to adapt herself to French foreign policy. Misgivings about French policy towards Russia lie too deep for them to be cast aside now. And seeing that Poland has already refused to follow Barthou<sup>8</sup> and Laval in this question, she is likely, if anything, to be even less inclined to make concessions to the present French Government. Even in the considerably simpler Czechoslovak question it would probably be difficult to bring Poland into line with France. At all events extremely far-reaching concessiveness on the part of the Czechs would be necessary to induce Poland to reach a settlement with this hated neighbour. Only today Count Szembek assured me that he saw no basis whatever for an understanding with Czechoslovakia, and when I asked whether a settlement of the minorities question might not perhaps afford a basis, he answered only very hesitatingly and was far from being unreservedly in agreement. I again had the impression that the aims of Polish policy *vis-à-vis* Czechoslovakia are very far-reaching and that fundamentally they are directed less to a settlement of the minorities question than to the return of the Teschen area which is regarded as Polish territory stolen by Czechoslovakia during the war against Soviet Russia. It seems, moreover, that no attempt has been made in Paris this time to mediate between Czechoslovakia and Poland, but that, in connexion with the armaments loan, the question was merely put and naturally answered in the negative by Rydz-Smigly, as to

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<sup>8</sup> Louis Barthou, French Foreign Minister, Feb.-Oct., 1934, visited Warsaw in April, 1934, see vol. II of this Series, documents Nos. 413 and 465 and vol. III, document No. 77. For Laval's visit, May 10-12, 1935, see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 88.

whether, in the event of a German attack on Czechoslovakia, the assisting French troops would have the Polish Army against them.

### *Military Protocol.*

As regards the military protocol, one has the impression that the points enumerated in the Russian memorandum would roughly correspond to what one could envisage under "strengthening of the alliance". However, I have not been able to obtain here any confirmation of the correctness of these data.

The following may be observed about the individual points in the Soviet memorandum:

(a) An exchange of officers has already previously taken place, although in the last few years only Polish officers have been seconded to France, whereas France, since the brusque termination of the French Military Mission, has given up sending officers to the Polish Army.

(b) Intelligence cooperation has existed hitherto between Poland and France, just as Poland, for example, also cooperates with Japan and Estonia in intelligence against Russia. That Franco-Polish intelligence cooperation has been primarily directed against Germany and will be so directed in future can doubtless be taken for granted.

(c) A special conference for operational questions seems to be envisaged but has allegedly been postponed until the result of the impending Locarno conference is known.

(d) The seconding of French experts on fortifications to Poland will probably not have a great deal of importance in practice, since the necessary funds for extensive fortifications are likely to be lacking for the present.

### *Financial Protocol.*

As regards the financial part, it involves, from what we have been able to ascertain here, 2,000,000,000 francs, of which 50–60 per cent are to be in cash and the rest in the form of French armaments supplies. The cash is to be partly supplied in the form of a long-term loan and partly in the form of a re-discount credit. It is also certain that the Poles are now at last also to receive the long-desired second instalment, amounting to 300 million francs, of the loan that was promised seven years ago for the development of the so-called magistral line for coal [*Kohlenmagistrale*] (Upper Silesia–Gdynia). It has not so far been possible to discover whether these 300 million are included in the previously mentioned 2,000 million or will be given in addition.<sup>9</sup> Nor has it been possible to check here whether the Russian report is

<sup>9</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "According to Lipski they are included."



correct that the payments are to be spread out over five years. However, news from Paris reaching the Italian Embassy here contains the same data. At all events the French seem, by means of a very complicated technical system, to have secured for themselves for a fairly long period an influence on the execution of the payments. If the cash payment, which is particularly important for Poland, is thus spread over several years, the tangible results of the financial assistance would not, after all, be as significant as might at first have been assumed from the figures that have become known. In any case the negotiations about the details of the credit operation are obviously not yet concluded. The cash loan will presumably also require the sanction of the French parliament.

The report that General Rydz-Smigly has declined supplies of raw materials from Russia in this connexion has also been confirmed to me from another quarter.

In addition to the negotiations about the financial assistance, endeavours are being made, as has been demonstrated particularly by the visit to Warsaw of the Minister of Commerce, Bastid,<sup>10</sup> to revive Polish-French economic relations. This will probably involve further advantages for Poland, since the commercial treaty in force hitherto has repeatedly led to an unfavourable balance for Poland.

Finally, both parties also intend, in connexion with the credit operations, to put a definitive end to the "Zyrardov" and "Warsaw Electricity Company" affairs,<sup>11</sup> which are so detrimental to the atmosphere.

### *Evaluation.*

In studying the significance of the Franco-Polish exchange of visits, it can first be noted that a far-reaching settlement of Polish-French relations has been achieved. Count Szembek, when he observed to me today that relations between Poland and France had become virtually intolerable, was right at least in that relations in the last few years have indeed no longer corresponded in any way to relations between allied States. The results now attained therefore represent an important stage in the development of Franco-Polish relations. In the first few years after the re-establishment of the Polish State, Poland was merely a vassal of France, wholly at her beck and call. Only after Beck had taken over the Foreign Ministry did Marshal

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<sup>10</sup> The French Minister of Commerce, Paul Bastid, visited Warsaw, Sept. 11-15.

<sup>11</sup> On May 29, 1936, a Polish court of the first instance had declared that the concession agreement between the city of Warsaw and the French owned Warsaw Electricity Company was void, and that the company's property was vested in the Warsaw municipality. See also vol. IV of this Series, document No. 88 and footnote 4 thereto.



Pilsudski's energetic endeavour to achieve greater independence in foreign policy become perceptible. Barthou, on the occasion of his visit to Warsaw, thought that he was taking this endeavour sufficiently into account by stressing in speeches and interviews that Poland had become a Great Power. At the same time, however, he did not scruple to pose the demand—a totally unacceptable one to Poland—that, through the signature of an Eastern Pact, the Soviet Union should be accorded that position which Poland regarded as her own prerogative. The pressure on Poland was continued in the same direction under Laval, too. Not until about a year ago does Paris seem to have realized the mistakes of the past. If Poland has now succeeded in obtaining the financial support hitherto withheld from her, without being compelled to grant concessions in questions vital to her interests, there is every occasion for satisfaction here at this result. But France too will be able to profit by the new situation which she has created. Although she will hardly succeed for the present in drawing Poland into her Russian policy, and although differences of opinion will certainly continue to exist between the two countries on numerous political questions, she will nevertheless be able to count more than hitherto upon Polish readiness to meet French wishes in questions which do not run counter to important Polish interests.

There remains the question of what effect this new development will have on German-Polish relations. In accordance with the assurances which he has repeatedly given us recently, M. Beck has told the diplomatic representatives here with the greatest emphasis that there will be no change in the policy followed hitherto and that Poland declines to be drawn into a combination directed against Germany, especially if Soviet Russia is concerned in it.<sup>12</sup> Even in the period when Franco-Polish relations were cooling off and the policy of understanding towards Germany was being concurrently introduced, the Franco-Polish alliance constituted for Marshal Pilsudski—as he and his Foreign Minister Beck repeatedly stated—a basis of Polish policy which one could not imagine as absent. But on the other hand the Marshal also laid down the principle that the security of the State must rest first upon its own strength, then on good relations with its neighbours, and only thirdly on alliances. That Poland has no intention at present of allowing any deterioration of relations with Soviet Russia has been plainly shown by the strikingly cool reception given to the Nuremberg speeches.<sup>13</sup> It can be assumed that, towards their German neighbour as well, the Polish Government will remain faithful to the principle laid down by Pilsudski and that they will attach importance to not

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<sup>12</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Lipski, on Beck's instructions, told me the same."

<sup>13</sup> i.e., the speeches made at the Reich Party Rally at Nuremberg, September 1936.

again placing in question the advantage represented by the hard-won establishment of good relations with us. I do not have the impression that in this respect there are any differences between Beck and Rydz-Smigly. But on the other hand it must be borne in mind that German rearmament and the shift in relative military strengths to Poland's disadvantage, which has occurred since the conclusion of the German-Polish Agreement of Understanding,<sup>14</sup> has not inconsiderably altered the situation as a whole.<sup>15</sup> The nervousness that has arisen just recently at the introduction of the two years' military service<sup>16</sup> is a clear proof of this. The tendencies that have now led to French assistance being invoked will therefore continue to be of importance. And since events like the conspiracy of the NSDAB in Kattowitz,<sup>17</sup> aimed at the separation of Upper Silesia, and the recent activity in the Danzig question, have aroused the impression that the revisionist dangers have not yet been eliminated, we shall in future have to reckon in greater measure than at present with the distrust which has thus been reawakened. And it is precisely among the broad masses of the population, where the old hatred of Germany was only slowly giving place to a friendlier attitude under the influence of the policy of understanding, that these events have made a strong impression and increased the fear of a neighbour who is becoming constantly more powerful. People now believe that they can once again see clearly where the enemy is, whilst at the same time the relief operation adroitly set in train by France points to where the friend may be found.

In spite of everything it would not, in my opinion, be correct to speak of a shift in Polish policy. There is no doubt that in the past we have greatly profited by the numerous French mistakes which have constantly aligned Poland and Germany against France, particularly in Eastern questions, and which have permitted us, with regard to cooperation in questions of large-scale policy too, to strengthen the German-Polish Agreement in a way which we were scarcely able to hope for when we concluded this Agreement. If relations between France and Poland are now becoming normal again, that need in no way be equated with a termination of the German-Polish policy of understanding; but rather there is actually emerging only that state of affairs which we could have presupposed when we concluded the Agreement of Understanding. Good relations between Poland and France need not in any way be an obstacle to good relations between Poland and Germany, and so far there is no occasion to assume that the Polish Government are not willing to follow this path.

V. MOLTKE

<sup>14</sup> Of Jan. 26, 1934; see vol. II of this Series, document No. 219.

<sup>15</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Yes."

<sup>16</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 926, and document No. 517.

<sup>17</sup> See document No. 278, and footnote 3 thereto.

## NOTES FOR A REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 17, 1936

As I have learned from a reliable source, the Soviet Russian Military Attaché in Warsaw has received the following information from Moscow about the Paris negotiations on the occasion of General Rydz-Smigly's visit:

Three protocols were drawn up covering the following spheres:

(1) *Political Protocol:*

(a) Reinforcement of the Alliance concluded between Poland and France in 1921.

(b) Poland to harmonize her foreign policy with the foreign policy of her ally, France.

(2) *Military Protocol:*

(a) Relations between the Polish and French armies are to be taken up on the basis of a more intensive exchange of officers.

(b) The intensity of the information service directed against Germany is to be rendered uniform and is to be conducted with greater activity than heretofore.

(c) Operational questions between the two General Staffs are to be the subject of a special conference.

(d) France is to second specialists in fortifications for the purpose of strengthening Poland's Western frontier.

(e) France is to supply war material, especially aircraft.

(3) *Financial Protocol:*

(a) France is to lend Poland 2,500 million francs, to be spread over five years.

(b) Of this [sum], destined for Gdynia is	500 million,
for goods, and credits for	
goods,	1,000 million,
to be paid in cash,	1,000 million.

The French side had required that Poland, out of the cash payment, should purchase raw materials for her war industry from Russia. General Rydz-Smigly rejected this demand.

<sup>18</sup> A minute by Woermann (631/252231) concerning this enclosure is dated Sept. 17 and reads: "Our Military Attaché in Warsaw, Colonel von Studnitz today gave me the attached confidential 'notes for a report', on the result of the Rydz-Smigly conversations in Paris. He has also given these notes to the Reich War Ministry and the Warsaw Embassy. Herr von Studnitz believed that this information would be completely new to us. I told him that it substantially confirmed our other information but that there were details which had not previously been known to us. What in particular was new was that Poland was supposed to have formally committed herself to having to bring her foreign policy into harmony with that of France. Herr von Studnitz also added that he was not informed as to how far these various agreements still required ratification."



As far as is known here, it cannot be said for certain whether these protocols have already been signed. It is, however, possible that they represent the basis for the negotiations during the visits of the two countries' Ministers of Commerce—that of Bastid (France) to Warsaw (he also went, *inter alia*, to Gdynia, during this visit), and also the projected visit of the Polish Minister of Commerce to Paris.

VON STUDNITZ

## No. 552

1872/423800-02

### *Memorandum by the Chargé d'Affaires in Great Britain*

LONDON, September 23, 1936.

Pol. I 2348.

Wigram, who lunched with me today, asked me spontaneously what I thought of the situation in British home politics. Foreign Embassies, he said, often had better information on this than the British themselves. Did I think, for instance, that Baldwin would remain Prime Minister much longer? On my answering this question in general terms, by saying that one had certainly read a lot in the press about Baldwin being supposed to intend to resign, Wigram replied that he personally thought that Baldwin would retire this very autumn. Thereupon I added that there were all sorts of rumours circulating in London at present to the effect that Eden was to be replaced by Morrison,<sup>1</sup> at which Wigram, without expressing an opinion on this particular question, merely said that if Baldwin went, a radical reconstruction of the whole Cabinet would presumably follow. Wigram then spoke at some length on the lack of leadership of the British Cabinet in foreign affairs and advanced the view that a change was certainly required. Utterances such as yesterday's statements to the press by Sir Samuel Hoare<sup>2</sup> upon his return from his Mediterranean tour were just what the British people wanted nowadays. He believed, too, that if men like Hoare and Winston Churchill were to exercise a decisive influence on affairs of State it would be much easier to maintain good relations with the other European States, especially the authoritarian Powers, than under the weak, vacillating Government of the present time.

Wigram spoke in exceptionally critical terms of the negotiations at Geneva and said he thought we were approaching a period when the League of Nations, which had been practically paralysed since the German withdrawal, would gradually develop into an organ which

<sup>1</sup> W. S. Morrison, Conservative M.P., then Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries.

<sup>2</sup> For a report of Sir Samuel Hoare's speech of Sept. 22, 1936, to press representatives, on his return to Britain from a tour of inspection of British naval bases and establishments in the Mediterranean, see *The Times* of Sept. 23, 1936.



would no longer deal with major political questions at all, but merely with questions such as the opium traffic and the white slave trade. In itself he welcomed this development, as he had always been for a policy of the realistically possible, though in this he was expressing only his own personal views.

Also in relation to the Western Pact, Wigram posed the question of who really had an interest in its speedy realization? Germany, he said, had stated that today she was powerful enough to defend her own frontiers without a guarantee from outside, and in his view Britain's interest in the Western Pact was also comparatively small. The Great Powers in Europe would get along much better without these multi-lateral obligations, which nowadays were to some extent already in existence, and to some extent projected.

On the situation in France, Wigram said that reports from the British Embassy in Paris on future developments in French domestic politics were extremely gloomy. But on the basis of information reaching him directly from French sources, he did not view the situation in such disquieting terms and did not believe that one should expect similar developments in France to those in Spain. In particular, he said, he heard that the Army was totally uninfluenced by political developments and represented a completely dependable instrument.

BISMARCK

## No. 553

1231/335829-35

### *Unsigned Notes*<sup>1</sup>

[ROME] September 23, 1936.

#### CONVERSATION WITH THE DUCE

##### *Recognition of Abyssinia*

"*Non ho freddo* [*sic: ? fretta*] [I am not cold [?in a hurry]]."

This question Count Ciano will discuss in Munich.

##### *France*

Fr[ance] is losing 2000 people a week. / Is politically finished. *Malato, senile*. [sick, senile.] She is losing nearly 300 people a day: That is a *village*!

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed comes from one of the five personal files of Reich Minister Frank, among the files of the Chancery of the Governor General of Poland, entitled "Reichskommissariat, Staatsministerium, Personal Correspondence". It is in the form of jottings in Frank's handwriting and presumably records Mussolini's remarks. Frank was in Rome in his capacity as Reich Commissioner of Justice and President of the Academy of German Law. For Ciano's record of this conversation see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 74-81 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 43-48).

Relations "indifferent".—

Culture of the stomach! A State which has raised the art of cooking to a principle!

*Spain*

Victory of the Nationalists. "I shall do everything to prevent the Bolsheviks from winning!—I have no agreements of any kind with Franco "*perchè oggi è necessario di vincere*—[because today it is necessary to conquer]."

*England*

Relation: Italy-E[ngland] is "*cattiva* [very bad"].

*King of England's journey.*<sup>2</sup> King is *troppo democratico* [too democratic].

Post via Brindisi. Special courier for the King daily.

I do not think that Ribb[entrop] will succeed. England, France, Belgium—*molto pericoloso* [very dangerous]. *Belgia* [Belgium]!—Soviet Russia are against us. And England will never suffer us "*to rise too high*". But the Führer is right when he causes Ribb[entrop] to make these attempts to "win England over".

Years ago, France and England concluded a *secret treaty*, under which neither of them can pursue a different policy from the other. This treaty is still in force. Does the Führer know this?

When England became a menace in Egypt, I sent five divisions to Libya. If they start building "bases" for aircraft, I shall build *counter* bases. They do not frighten me, *Signori Inglesi* [the English gentlemen]. The Mediterranean is *our* sea.—Everything that England possesses in the Mediterranean she occupied during the course of major wars. England has no right whatsoever to these islands from the racial point of view.

*Hungary*

Our relations "*amichevole* [friendly]".

*Austria*

On June 5<sup>3</sup> I had Schuschnigg here and told him: "Make peace with Germany. I do not forget that Austria is a German State."<sup>1</sup>

The German-Aust[rian] Pact is a heavy blow to *Prague* and a gain for Germany and Italy.

*League of Nations*

It is possible that even if only a trace of Abyssinia appears at Geneva, I shall withdraw at once.—Perhaps even this evening.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 545, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 360.

*Colonies*

Germany is completely in the right and will have my full support if she demands her colonies back. Germany, like Italy, is poor in raw materials. An international raw materials committee is nonsense; for it would merely be a matter of those who have the raw materials extracting much money from those who have none.—

*My visit to Germany*

We are not only the Heads of States, but also Leaders of Movements which are today conducting a life and death struggle against almost the whole world. Not only diplomatically. As with you, *in comradely fashion!*

If I come today, it must not be merely a "State Visit", but a meeting with results of *absolutely clear* reality: It must be the completion of cooperation in the final, formal form.—The diplomats to be brought in as well.

I shall be glad to come, and I am proud to be thus honoured by the Führer of Germany, whom I admire with all my heart.

Count Ciano would come at once, at the Führer's invitation, to prepare everything.

*No war on religions!*

Not *now!* Too serious!—Too easy arguments for the adversary!

I would bomb the English to bits with aircraft, if they were to move. Edward's journey is ridiculous.—

To try that on *me!* These shopkeepers!

The State must come before the Party. The Party is the backbone of the State. No dual régime. State and Party the staves of the Fascio!—

*Cultural Cooperation*

I *heartily* welcome the Institute of Legal History.<sup>4</sup>

For me the Führer has always been an ideal. I have always taken his part. Even in the most difficult times. Long ago, before you people came into power and I was always being told from Germany and by Germans that the NSDAP and its Führer had "no prospects".

<sup>4</sup> Frank was proposing to found an Institute of Legal History at Munich and to include in it a section on Fascist legislation. Professor Arrigo Solmi, Italian Minister of Justice, was in fact invited by Frank on this occasion to attend the opening ceremony.

The Church is like a pair of bellows. If it is pressed together, then it compresses the air and becomes stronger.

The Church worked loyally with me in Italy in the Abyssinian war, priests' spirit of sacrifice, prayers, etc.

The English are opposed to our *systems*.

A periodical printed an article against Nuremberg: I immediately confiscated it. (*Alfieri*<sup>5</sup> was given the order *in my presence*.)

There are already two fronts, the Führer said in Nuremberg. Quite right, but the English will never understand this.—I have read all the speeches carefully.

Before the Suez Canal was built, the English, too, had to sail round the Cape!

The English know who we are. They defended themselves most of all against the closure of the Canal.—

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<sup>5</sup> Dino Alfieri, Minister of Press and Propaganda.

[EDITORS' NOTE: On September 24, 1936 at the close of the meeting held between September 8 and 24, of the German-Rumanian Governmental Committees at Munich, three economic agreements were concluded; for the published portion (M343/M015627-36) see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1936, Pt. II, pp. 311-315; the confidential protocol to this agreement, and the confidential protocol on the outcome of the meeting have been filmed as M343/M015637-41 and M015613-26 respectively. Section I of the latter includes, under paragraph 7, a passage on oil deliveries which is the subject of subsequent references and which reads: "With effect from October 1, 1936, German purchases of Rumanian mineral oil and its derivatives, with the exception of asphalt, coke and paraffin, are only to be paid for under the provisions of the Clearing Agreement as long as the amounts paid in, in this



respect, in each calendar quarter do not total more than 25 per cent of all amounts paid, during the preceding calendar quarter, into Special Account A including the value of the Rumanian deliveries which are to be offset outside the Clearing Agreement.

"As soon as the sums entered in the register [*Beibuch*] of Special Account A reach the above-mentioned limit of 25 per cent, the exports of and payments for any further purchases of mineral oil from Rumania are to be effected after special agreement has been reached with the Rumanian Government in each individual case."

## No. 554

348/201767-68

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 25, 1936.

RM 707.

The Italian Chargé d'Affaires told me, during his today's visit, that Minister Ciano had instructed him to inform me that he [Ciano] wanted to come to Germany in the near future and would therefore like to receive an invitation in this sense from me. Signor Ciano would like to pay this visit before the proposed meeting in Vienna,<sup>1</sup> as he thought that a personal exchange of views here would be useful. As far as it depended on the Italian Foreign Minister, a possible date for the visit would be at about the end of October, as the meeting in Vienna would not in any case take place before November.

I told Signor Magistrati in reply that, as he was aware, I had already discussed the question of this visit by his Minister and brother-in-law with Ambassador Attolico in the summer.<sup>2</sup> I had for a variety of reasons thought that for the visit, as then proposed to take place during the Olympic Games, would be inexpedient. On the other hand, I had already told Signor Attolico before he left that a visit from

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<sup>1</sup> i.e., the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the States signatories of the Rome Protocols, to be held in Vienna on November 9-10.

<sup>2</sup> In a memorandum, RM 612 of Aug. 4 (348/201761) Neurath recorded this conversation as follows: "The Italian Ambassador called on me today and began by speaking of a visit by Minister Ciano to Berlin, which was being dealt with by Reich Minister Frank and his office. I told the Ambassador that Herr Frank had said to me that he had not issued an invitation to Ciano. Nor had he informed the Führer of the matter. But he did know that Count Ciano would like to come to Berlin for the Olympic Games. However, in that event an invitation would have to come from either the Führer or myself. For my part, however much I would welcome Ciano's coming here, I did not think the present a suitable moment since his visit would supply further ammunition to the campaign, which, as one could already notice, was being conducted against Germany and Italy as alleged promoters, if not indeed the actual instigators, of the Spanish revolution. Signor Attolico said he would first speak to the intermediary, who has come here, once more and would let me know the result. He himself shared my view that it would be inexpedient for Ciano to come at the present moment."

Count Ciano at an appropriate time would, of course, be welcomed by us. As I did not know what the Führer's programme was, I would at once find out about it and would then get in touch with him, Magistrati, again.

The Chargé d'Affaires repeatedly emphasized how important was this visit by his brother-in-law, pointing out in particular that it would be his first journey abroad as Foreign Minister. Signor Ciano was most anxious that his first visit should be to Germany, a country which he did not as yet know at all, though he had been all over the rest of the world.

FREIHERR V. NEURATH

No. 555

1847/420923-25

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 25, 1936.

RM 708.

Pol. IV 3357.

During my stay in Budapest<sup>1</sup> I took the opportunity of discussing the minority question<sup>2</sup> in detail with the competent Hungarian Ministers, namely, M. de Kánya, the deputy Minister President, de Darányi, and the Minister of the Interior, M. de Kozma. All the Ministers emphasized their willingness to contribute to an early solution of this problem. They all stressed, however, that there were great difficulties in the way of carrying it out in practice, particularly because, in the question of schools, for instance, the Government controlled only a proportion of these, the majority of the schools being either confessional or parish schools. I refused to accept this argument and told the gentlemen that ways and means must be found to make not only the clergy, but more especially the parishes, amenable to such decrees as the Government might issue. I further pointed out that in my opinion the chief difficulty, especially in the schools question, was that the Hungarian side were not providing sufficiently well trained teachers. Moreover, the measures taken against Reich Germans coming into German parishes on visits or for purposes of study had recently been such that if the unfriendly attitude of the Hungarian authorities towards Reich Germans continued, I could not but fear

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<sup>1</sup> Neurath arrived in Budapest on Sept. 19 for a private visit to his daughter, who was the wife of Mackensen, the German Minister there.

<sup>2</sup> For the discussions on the minority question see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 527. A detailed brief on this question, submitted to Neurath by Stieve under cover of a minute of Sept. 18 (2425/512503-29) shows that no further steps had been taken in the interval.

that German-Hungarian relations would be seriously endangered. The Ministers countered this latter reproach by stating that amongst the Reich Germans who had recently been arrested or expelled there had been some confirmed political agitators who claimed to have been sent to Hungary by every sort of Reich organization.

We finally agreed that on Minister de Kánya's return to Budapest conversations would be held there, in which he himself, the Deputy Minister President and the Minister of the Interior, and, for the German side, our Minister there, would take part, in order to draw up basic principles for the treatment of the German minorities in Hungary. The impression I gained from my conversations with the various Ministers was that they all had somewhat narrow views about the treatment of the minorities in Hungary but, on the other hand, were extraordinarily sensitive about the treatment of the Hungarian minorities in other countries, particularly in the Successor States. I accordingly put this view to them.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

## No. 556

3476/E019062-63

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, September 25, 1936.

RM. 709.

Pol. IV 3354.

During my visit to the Regent, de Horthy, he mentioned, amongst other things, the Habsburg question. He informed me, and that most solemnly, that in Hungary the Habsburg question had been finally settled, and that the role of the House of Habsburg was played out. The percentage of Legitimists in Hungary was visibly diminishing and was politically of scarcely any importance now. No Habsburg would ever ascend the throne of the kingdom of Hungary again.

M. de Horthy then went on to say that he had recently also discussed the Habsburg question with Herr Schuschnigg in Austria.<sup>2</sup> Schuschnigg's attitude had not been so unambiguous. Rather, he had merely stated that the question of the restoration of the Habsburgs in Austria was not acute, and when M. de Horthy had remarked that a possible

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<sup>1</sup> The author of the document here printed would appear to be Neurath; see also document No. 555 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> This would appear to be a reference to the meeting of Aug. 21; see document No. 516, footnote 2.

return of Archduke Otto to Austria would most seriously prejudice relations between Hungary and Austria, Herr Schuschnigg had replied evasively. M. de Horthy went on to say that even in such an event there would be no question of a restoration in Hungary, although the situation would of course be rendered more difficult for him personally and for the Hungarian Government.

## No. 557

147/78420

*Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, September 25, 1936.

The Polish Ambassador, having made a somewhat urgent appointment by telephone today, called on me, and told me that he had been informed by telephone by M. Beck, from Geneva, that the report of the Polish Government on the *Leipzig* incident<sup>1</sup> would be accepted *tel quel* by the Council; he [Beck] had agreed with Mr. Eden, the *rapporteur*, that the Council would simply take note of the report. Mr. Eden had only stipulated that he should take this opportunity of saying a few words in appreciation of the League of Nations Commissioner, Lester, but without making any direct reference to the *Leipzig* incident.<sup>2</sup> M. Lipski also said that M. Beck would be speaking to Mr. Eden today about the question of Lester's continuing in Danzig; he hoped to be able to persuade Eden that Lester should go at the end of this year. Moreover, rumours were circulating in Geneva that the whole Danzig problem was to be brought up in some sensational form or other during the present session of the League of Nations. M. Lipski said, however, that he did not believe in these rumours and could in any event assure me that M. Beck was on his guard. I thanked the Ambassador for his information.

The Polish Government obviously want to ensure that we realise what efforts they are making in Geneva to have the Danzig question dealt with peaceably and that in consequence they deserve our gratitude.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>1</sup> For the text of this report see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, pp. 1333-1334. A draft text of the Polish report (1723/399764-67) is marked: "Communicated in confidence by the Polish Ambassador today. D[ieckhoff], Sept. 18."

<sup>2</sup> For the text of Eden's statement of Sept. 25 see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, p. 1166.



## No. 558

1872/423787-94

*The Foreign Minister to the Ambassador in Italy*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, September 26, 1936.

e.o. Pol. I 2290 I.

We attach importance, before replying to the British Memorandum of September 17 regarding the Five Power Conference,<sup>2</sup> to getting into touch with the Italian Government in confidence in order to establish whether and how far our attitude and the attitude of Italy may be coordinated. We should welcome it if such coordination could be achieved to the greatest possible extent. You should therefore discuss the matter at your end immediately and, if possible, with Mussolini himself, making use of the following points of view.

We are not interested in any special acceleration of the preliminary diplomatic discussions, but we cannot postpone our reply to the British Memorandum for very long. As the moment for our reply we have at present<sup>3</sup> in mind some time round about the end of the Geneva meeting of the League Assembly<sup>4</sup> in order to prevent our statements from being made the subject of discussions in Geneva whilst the Government representatives are still there. Even though the Italians may wish to postpone their reply still further on account of the treatment of the Abyssinian question in the League of Nations, they will none the less understand that we, for our part, cannot use this Italian attitude as a pretext for postponing our own reply.

Basically, our attitude towards the idea of concluding a new Western Pact is a positive one in principle, provided, of course, that the details of the pact can be so formulated as to accord with our point of view. Our positive attitude is determined, firstly, by the fact that we ourselves proposed such a pact in the German Peace Plan of March<sup>5</sup> of this year and cannot now adopt an attitude which would make our own offer appear disingenuous. Apart from this, however, we must realize that if the project should be wrecked on an obviously negative attitude on the part of Germany, this could have really serious consequences for European affairs in general. Quite apart from an increase in the

<sup>1</sup> Hassell was at this time in Berlin (see document No. 523, footnote 16). A marginal note on the present document reads: "A copy of the new version as amended here was given to Herr von Hassell on the afternoon of [Sept.] 26 by F[oreign] M[inister]. Ko[tze], [Sept.] 26." Hassell's copy (M286/M011926-33) has been found in the files of the Embassy in Rome. For Hassell's marginal notes thereon see footnotes 4 and 7 below. See also document No. 568.

<sup>2</sup> See document No 546, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> The words "at present" were added in Neurath's handwriting.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Hassell's handwriting on the copy cited in footnote 1 above: "After the visit."

<sup>5</sup> Of Mar. 31. See document No. 242.

general tension, the immediate consequence would probably be that the ties between Britain and France would become ever closer and that the relations of these two countries with the Soviet Union would also be strengthened. It is, after all, an unmistakable fact that the Soviet Government are making every effort to hinder the Western Pact negotiations or to frustrate them altogether.<sup>6</sup>

In our reply to the British the following points would have to be raised:

(1) We, of course, abide by our negative attitude towards the Soviet Government. Since, however, the British Memorandum does not make any express demands of us in this direction, we can at this stage confine ourselves to the statement that only after agreement has been reached on a new Western Pact will it be possible to see what further international problems may need to be raised for discussion, and that in this respect we must therefore reserve to ourselves complete freedom of action.<sup>7</sup>

(2) On the question of whether we should concede to the French an exception from the mutual renunciation of war, which would make it possible for them to maintain their familiar treaties of alliance to their previous extent, we shall take the view that for our part we are, in accordance with the German Peace Plan, prepared for an unconditional renunciation of war, that is, for one without exceptions [and, that if other Powers are not in a position to adopt a similar attitude, it is for them to make proposals embodying the exceptions they desire.]<sup>8</sup> We shall therefore<sup>9</sup> stress that we cannot consider the course, proposed in Section 5, paragraph 1, of the British Memorandum, of formulating the exceptions on the lines of Article 2 of the old Rhine Pact. It was, after all, over Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, to which Article 2 of the Rhine Pact refers, that there arose that well-known difference of opinion amongst the Locarno Powers which played a decisive part on the occasion of our Rhineland action. Apart from this, it is questionable what will happen about the whole matter of the application of Article 16 in future, so that for this reason alone it cannot be made the basis for a fundamental point in the Western Pact. [You should indicate cautiously and in confidence that we could imagine a solution of this difficulty something along the lines of an exception to the renunciation of war applying if one of the signatories of the Western Pact were to attack a State which was outside the Pact and if all the other signatories expressly declared that this first signatory was the aggressor.]<sup>8</sup>

<sup>6</sup> The words "or to frustrate them altogether" were added in Neurath's handwriting.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Hassell's handwriting on the copy cited in footnote 1 above: "The French are holding firmly to the Soviet [?Pact]. Loc[arno] also to come into play in the event of an East[ern] conflict."

<sup>8</sup> The words printed in square brackets were deleted from the draft by Neurath.

<sup>9</sup> The opening words of this sentence, which have been altered by Neurath, originally read: "In this connexion we shall, however . . ."

(3) We shall state our opposition to the Western Pact's being linked with the League of Nations. There are no grounds for making the Council of the League of Nations, as under the old Rhine Pact, the body for deciding when the guarantee obligations yet to be agreed upon shall come into play. [In the Rhine Pact, that was already a mere façade.]<sup>8</sup> Moreover, to reproduce this structure, would, in effect, be to presuppose our immediate return to the League of Nations.<sup>10</sup> [Although we have stated that we are prepared in principle for a such return, and do indeed wish to abide by this, it nevertheless appears to us to be right to keep this question open for the time being.]<sup>8</sup>

(4) The most difficult question may well be that of between which parties to the Western Pact, and for what cases, obligations of military assistance ought to be agreed upon. Britain's desire to receive a guarantee in her favour from Germany and France for the event of a French or German attack, as the case may be, introduces an entirely new factor into the Western Pact as compared with the old Rhine Pact. Such an extension of the framework of the Rhine Pact has [indeed],<sup>8</sup> however, been under discussion ever since there emerged the project of special agreements concerning protection against sudden air attacks. What is the attitude of the Italians to this? Do they attach importance to agreeing upon a guarantee, such as Britain desires for herself, which would apply *mutatis mutandis* to relations between Germany, France and Italy? Unacceptable to us would be the solution of prescribing uniform obligations of assistance between all signatories to the Western Pact for all conflicts arising among them, since we should then, in an Anglo-Italian conflict, be compelled, in all circumstances, to side with one party or the other. On this point you should, however, conduct the conversation with particular care, in order not to commit us prematurely to one line or the other. It will also have to be borne in mind that, in the event of stubborn Italian procrastination, a situation might develop in which the British finally approached us with the question of whether we might be prepared to agree to a Four Power pact leaving Italy out. We naturally attach importance to Italy functioning, as in the old Rhine Pact, as a guarantor, together with Britain, of the German-French renunciation of war. We cannot, however, at this stage definitely commit ourselves *vis-à-vis* the Italians to consenting in no case to a pact in which Italy was not included. That is a question which we must make dependent upon further political developments. In our first reply to the British we might [perhaps]<sup>8</sup> confine ourselves to the formula that our chief concern

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<sup>10</sup> In a memorandum of Sept. 16 (6409/E476836) Dieckhoff recorded a conversation with the British Chargé d'Affaires, who made what he described as a personal enquiry as to whether Germany would be prepared to take part, in some form or other, in discussions on the reform of the League.



is to see the renunciation of war between Germany and France, as also between Germany and Belgium, guaranteed in the same way as in the old Rhine Pact, and that we can only come to a decision about agreeing on assistance obligations going beyond the old structure when we are clear as to the intentions and wishes of the other parties. Despite the possibility of an evasive formula of this kind, we should, of course, greatly welcome it if we could already now be informed about Italian intentions on this point.

V[ON N[EURATH]

### No. 559

1613/386530-31

#### *Memorandum by the Head of Political Division IV*

VERY URGENT

BERLIN, September 26, 1936.

SECRET

e.o. Pol. I 1814g.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Altenburg.

The Leader of the Sudeten German Party, Konrad Henlein, has made a request, which is set down in the attached application, that the so-called political payments for the Party, which cease on September 30, 1936,<sup>1</sup> should be *continued* as from October 1, 1936, and that in the same manner as heretofore, i.e., that 12,000 RM should be transferred, payment being made through the Legation in Prague, and that the balance of 3,000 RM then remaining from the total of 15,000 RM, should be paid out to the Party's office in Berlin.

The application was supported by the oral explanation that the organizational changes within the Party, which are to be carried out in the near future after various disputes have been settled, will necessitate the continuation of the payments. It is therefore recommended that Konrad Henlein's request be granted for a further six months, from October 1, 1936, to March 31, 1937.

Submitted herewith to Personnel Department with the request for a decision.<sup>2</sup>

HEI[NBURG]

<sup>1</sup> See also vol. IV of this Series, documents Nos. 285, 320, 357 and 413.

<sup>2</sup> The document here printed is initialled: "E[rdmannsdorff], Sept. 29," D[ienstmann] [Sept.] 29," and bears the marginal note, "Approved. Pr[üfer], Sept. 29." A minute dated Sept. 30 and addressed by Dienstmann to Altenburg (1613/386532) reads: "The payments will be continued as previously until March 31, 1937."



[Enclosure]<sup>3</sup>

To the Foreign Ministry, Berlin.

I request that, as from October 1, 1936, the sum of RM 15,000 monthly for our Movement be granted once again, of which 12,000 RM should be sent to Prague and 3,000 RM used in Berlin.

With many thanks,

Heil Hitler!

KONRAD HENLEIN

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<sup>3</sup> The original of this enclosure is in Henlein's handwriting.

No. 560

392/212123-29

*Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff to Ambassador Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, September 28, 1936.

DEAR JOACHIM: In accordance with your wishes, I have spoken to Herr von Neurath about the building alterations planned for the Embassy in London. He had already been informed by the Budget Department, with whom the architect Speer had been in touch, and was about to write you a letter, which has doubtless reached you in the meantime.

I have been thinking again about the notion of getting C[raigie]<sup>1</sup> to come here, and I think it is very good. But we cannot, in my opinion, ask him to come here merely to receive a Note; he must rather be told that we want to discuss a few points with him. Moreover, I am not quite certain that C[raigie] really will come. But at all events we would be placed in a tactically better position by the invitation, even if it were not accepted, and could then, if the British were to complain about our Note, say that we had, after all, been prepared for a discussion but that the British had declined the discussion. I would not recommend that the Note, as at present drafted,<sup>2</sup> be sent off at this moment. Even though, in many points, the references to the activities of the Soviets afford us a good *point d'appui*, yet other contentions are not so strong and will certainly be seized upon by the British; for instance, they will scarcely acquiesce in our now telling them that the Russian and French fleets ought to be added together; instead, they will retort that we ought already to have advanced this argument at the time of the conclusion of the Naval Treaty in June of last year,<sup>3</sup> since the scope of the Franco-Russian Pact was already known to us at that time. There are also a few other passages in the Note which,

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 486.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably draft No. 3; see document No. 571, footnote 1.

<sup>3</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 156.

in my opinion, would be bound needlessly to fill the British with distrust. I fear, therefore, that to fire off this Note at the present moment without any compelling necessity would rebuff the British and that you would be making your début in London unnecessarily difficult. It would certainly be much better, as you have in mind, first to make another attempt to talk to the British and, if possible, to get C[raigie] to come here.

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever, .

DIECKHOFF

## No. 561

408/215119-22

### *Memorandum by the Director of the Legal Department*

BERLIN, September 30, 1936.

The Italian Ambassador called on me yesterday in order to discuss the British Memorandum on the Five Power Conference<sup>1</sup> with me. He said that it was extremely important to establish, in advance of the forthcoming visit of Count Ciano, a uniform German line which could then also be expressed in the communiqué on the visit.

The French tendency was to turn the Western Pact into a real regional pact with reciprocal obligations of assistance applying unrestrictedly to all parties to the Pact. The British, on the other hand, as their Memorandum showed and as he had predicted to me, wished to supplement the old Locarno system by a three-party guarantee relationship only—London-Berlin-Paris. This tripartite treaty relationship within the framework of the Western Pact was, for Italy, the decisive point. The Italian Government had, admittedly, agreed to take part in negotiations on a new Locarno. The precondition had, however, been that the new pact should, in principle, apart from the provisions regarding the Rhineland, be kept within the framework of the old Pact. If it were now to be expanded by a tripartite guarantee relationship London-Berlin-Paris, then that would be a radical alteration to which Italy's agreement did not extend. Where Italy was concerned the situation would be no different even if the British were possibly to offer to include, alongside the tripartite guarantee relationship London-Berlin-Paris, a second similar tripartite guarantee relationship Berlin-Paris-Rome. Italy had, naturally, no interest at all in such a guarantee relationship between Berlin, Paris and Rome.

I told the Ambassador in reply that, where we were concerned, the whole matter was still in the first stage of deliberations. As far as I was

<sup>1</sup> Of Sept. 17; see document No. 546, enclosure.

informed, the Führer had not yet come to any concrete decision regarding our attitude to the British Memorandum. Herr von Hassell had, however, to my knowledge received instructions from the Foreign Minister,<sup>2</sup> to get in touch with the Italian Government first of all, in preparation for our expression of views on the British Memorandum. I granted Signor Attolico that to introduce a tripartite guarantee relationship London-Berlin-Paris would be substantially to alter the structure of the old Locarno Pact. It was, however, a matter, which in my opinion was no easy one, of finding plausible arguments with which the German and Italian sides could oppose such an extension of the old system.

Signor Attolico thought that the tripartite guarantee relationship, which he had mentioned, was, naturally, only camouflage for an Anglo-French alliance, and that we could simply say that to undertake a guarantee in favour of Britain would conflict, in principle, with our standpoint, since we should thus be creating a precedent for assistance pacts with other countries. When I described this argument as not quite convincing and also drew attention to the Peace Plan of March 31,<sup>3</sup> the Ambassador finally stated quite frankly that, politically, the situation was, indeed, such that Italy had no interest in seeing a pact brought about which would give Britain a feeling of security in Western Europe, because Britain would thereby gain more freedom of action in the Mediterranean to Italy's disadvantage. German policy could not and would not, as he thought he could definitely assume, depart from the political line which Italy was adopting in response to this situation. The Reich Foreign Minister and the Führer too had always stated unambiguously that Germany would only accept a pact in which Italy also took part. Italy's participation could not, however, be counted upon if a special guarantee relationship between London, Berlin and Paris were now to be laid down in the Pact. Perhaps it was not necessary for us immediately and definitively to object to the British about this guarantee relationship, provided that we and the Italians were privately agreed amongst ourselves about rejecting it. Outwardly we could perhaps give prominence to the question of the Franco-Soviet Treaty of Alliance and to the question of the linking of the Pact with the League of Nations Covenant. We must not, after all, forget that Italy would be rendering us an important service were she to support us in rejecting the Franco-Soviet Alliance.

I made no remark about the fundamental question of committing ourselves to the Italian line, and, for the rest, only pointed out that in my personal opinion the German view on the question of the Franco-Soviet Alliance and on the question of the linking of the Pact with the

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<sup>2</sup> See document No. 558.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 242.

League of Nations Covenant was self-evident. On the first question we were in the comfortable position of being able to reply that Germany, for her part, remained prepared to make *vis-à-vis* France an unlimited renunciation of war without any exceptions, and that if France, for her part, desired exceptions from this renunciation of war, it would be up to her to make proposals in this respect. The rejection of the linking of the Pact with the League of Nations Pact was also easy for us to justify.

Signor Attolico agreed with this but stressed repeatedly and very emphatically that the decisive point was rejection of the tripartite guarantee relationship London-Berlin-Paris desired by the British, and that it was needful to make it known from the outset that Germany would only accept a Western Pact with Italy participating on a basis of equality of rights.<sup>4</sup>

GAUS

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<sup>4</sup> Marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting, "[The] F[oreign] M[inister] has made the following comment on M[inisterial] D[irector] Gaus' copy: 'There can be no question of a commitment in principle to the Italian line in the question of the tripartite guarantee relationship. Sig[ned]: v[on] Neurath, Sept. 30.'"

## No. 562

348/201770-71

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, September 30, 1936.

RM 717.

The Italian Ambassador called on me this morning and began by speaking about the proposed visit of Minister Ciano to Berlin. He said that in Rome he had repeatedly spoken to Ciano and then to Mussolini too about the matter and that it was desired in Rome that Ciano's visit to Berlin should be made as impressive an occasion as possible. Recalling my previous talks with the Ambassador about this visit,<sup>1</sup> I, for my part, tried to explain the inadvisability of making too much of it. Signor Attolico thought, however, that in any case the important points to be discussed here by Ciano ought to be set out in a communiqué. As such points, he mentioned (1) the recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia into the Italian Empire, (2) certain agreements requiring to be made concerning Italy's and Germany's relations with the League of Nations (Signor Attolico spoke of the possibility of reaching an agreement whereby Italy, as long as she was in the League of Nations, would also look after Germany's interests there, whilst Germany, in the event of Italy leaving the League of Nations, would, for her part, rescind her

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 554, footnote 2.



intention of returning there), (3) the affirmation of a common defence front against Bolshevism, and, lastly, (4) the attitude of Italy and Germany to the proposed new Five Power Pact.

On the last-named point the Ambassador spoke at length. He defined Italy's attitude to the pact proposed by the British Government as being that Italy was opposed to regional pacts. The British proposal for a tripartite guarantee of the new pact by France, Britain and Germany, however, meant a regional pact of this kind. The old Locarno Pact had been a bipartite pact, concluded between France and Germany and guaranteed by Britain and Italy. The new tripartite pact would merely be designed to replace Article 16 of the League of Nations Covenant, or to make it more effective. I told the Ambassador that Herr von Hassell had been instructed<sup>2</sup> to discuss in Rome our provisional attitude to the British proposals. We would, in any case, refuse to have the new pact linked with the League of Nations. Apart from this, we also took the view that Italy must be brought into the new agreement. Upon the Ambassador's remarking that our replies to the British Government must coincide as far as possible, I answered that, in my view, it would not be desirable for the replies to accord too closely with one another. Naturally—and this was the object of our exchange of views and of Hassell's instructions—we must agree on the main lines. I believed, however, that this was already the case.

The Ambassador wished to call here again on the matter after Hassell's report on his conversation in Rome had been received.<sup>3</sup>

FRHR. V. NEURATH

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 558.

<sup>3</sup> The information contained in the document here printed was transmitted to the Embassy in Rome by Dieckhoff in telegram No. 232 of Oct. 1 (348/201772-73). In a memorandum, Pol. I 2383 of Oct. 2 (1872/423803-06), Gaus recorded a conversation of the previous day with Attolico, who repeated his arguments against the "*pacte triangulaire*" and in favour of the German and Italian replies being made to accord.

## No. 563

7790/E562836-36/1

### *Minute by an Official of the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

BERLIN, September 30, 1936.

SK 141 geh.

Ambassador von Ribbentrop, who is at present confined to bed, has instructed me to inform the Commander in Chief of the Navy that, at the most recent discussion<sup>1</sup> of the naval question between the Führer and Chancellor and Ambassador v. Ribbentrop, consideration was given to the question of whether, instead of handing over in London the

<sup>1</sup> No record of this discussion has been found.

German draft reply (the contents of which have been approved<sup>2</sup>) to the British Note of July 29,<sup>3</sup> one of the British representatives concerned with naval questions—Sir Robert Craigie—should not be invited to come to Berlin for a discussion. Then, at this discussion, upon presentation of the Note, occasion would be taken to explain the German views in principle, given the various changes in the naval situation.

Ambassador v. Ribbentrop, however, after considering all the factors involved, has come to the conclusion that it could well be more expedient to have the exhaustive Note communicated in London, when it could be stated that the German Government would consider it useful to have a fundamental discussion of the whole complex of questions involved in the qualitative treaty with Sir Robert Craigie in Berlin. Ambassador v. Ribbentrop would be grateful if the Commander in Chief of the Navy would give his opinion on this suggestion and would himself procure a decision from the Führer and Chancellor, since the matter can now scarcely be postponed for very much longer and it is not yet possible to say when the Ambassador will have recovered.

Herewith respectfully submitted to the Commander in Chief of the Navy, General Admiral Raeder.<sup>4</sup>

E. KORDT

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 560 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the summary of Anglo-Soviet discussions handed to the Germans on July 30, 1936; see document No. 486, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "To M. (1) The Note should be sent off as soon as possible. (2) Nothing should be said about Cr[aigie] coming to us. (3) If he should later express the wish to visit us, it could then be considered. R[aeder], Oct. 5."

## No. 564

4943/E273440-44

*The Acting State Secretary to the Legations in Finland, Denmark,  
Norway and Sweden*

BERLIN, October 1, 1936.

Pol. I 1862 g.<sup>1</sup>

According to a communiqué published in London,<sup>2</sup> the negotiations proceeding between Britain on the one hand, and Finland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden on the other, about the conclusion of an agreement on the qualitative limitation of naval forces on the pattern of the Treaty of March 26 [*sic*—25] of this year (cf. our despatch of May 9, 1936—

<sup>1</sup> This document was originally drafted as instructions Pol. I 2261 (7791/E564026-29) and submitted to the High Command of the Navy for approval. In his answer, SK 137 geh. of Sept. 30, 1936 (7791/E564024-25), the Head of the Naval Command Office, Guse, requested that two alterations should be made, giving his reason in each case.

<sup>2</sup> On Sept. 17; see *The Times* of Sept. 18, 1936.

II R 1279)<sup>3</sup> have been interrupted in order to give the delegates of the Scandinavian countries an opportunity of informing their Governments about the present state of affairs. The communiqué says that full information has been given to the delegates. It can therefore probably be assumed that during their stay in London the delegates of the Scandinavian countries have also been informed of the results of the Anglo-Russian talks that took place in the Foreign Office from May 14 to July 29 of this year for the purpose of concluding a bilateral Anglo-Soviet Russian naval agreement.<sup>4</sup>

These Anglo-Russian agreements are of decisive importance for the coming into being of further agreements between Britain and those Powers which are not yet parties to the agreement of March 26 of this year. If you should happen to be approached on this subject by Government circles at your end, there are no objections to your entering into such conversations. Since, however, it was only in strict confidence that the British Government informed us at the time of the contents of these agreements, you should not state that the information was given us by the British but, if need be and in accordance with the truth, describe the source as being reliable information, variously originating, which has reached us in the meantime.

The main contents of the British-Soviet Russian talks can be briefly set forth as follows:

The Soviet Government have declared themselves ready to conclude with the British Government a naval treaty corresponding to the international Treaty of March 26 of this year, with the following reservations, which have been accepted by Britain:

1) As far as her entire naval forces in the Far East are concerned Russia reserves the right not to consider herself bound by the provisions of the Naval Treaty of 1936 regarding qualitative limitation and the exchange of information, so long as there shall not be concluded a similar special agreement between Russia and Japan on these points.

2) Russia shall consider herself bound by the provisions of the London Naval Treaty only to the extent to which Germany will take upon herself similar obligations.

3) Russia reserves the right to lay down before January 1, 1943, two battleships carrying 15- or 16-inch guns, i.e., guns of a calibre which exceeds the maximum limit provided for in the London Naval Treaty by 1 or (at the most) 2 inches as the case may be.

4) Russia reserves the right to build 7 to 10 cruisers of 8,000 tons carrying 7.1 inch guns. (Since the calibre of these cruisers exceeds the maximum calibre for 'B'-class cruisers permitted in the international

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7456/H176395-401); this circular, dated May 9, 1936, summarized the terms of the London Naval Treaty of Mar. 25, 1936, and instructed Missions on German policy in respect thereof.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 486.



agreements, these cruisers can only be reckoned as coming under the category of 'A'-class cruisers, although their tonnage does not exceed<sup>5</sup> that of the largest permitted 'B'-class cruisers.)

5) The Russian Government reserve the right to furnish no information regarding minor naval vessels and auxiliary vessels.

In our view, the reservations conceded to the Russians by the British are in no way justified. In particular, reservation (4) concerning the Russian 'A'-class cruisers seems open to objection. It renders illusory the building holiday for 'A'-class cruisers provided for in the London Treaty. We should, therefore, be glad if Britain could induce Russia to abandon the reservations mentioned above. Otherwise—and this observation is confidential—we would be forced to make the same reservations on our side. In the long run, if Russia were to persist in her reservations and then avail herself of them, a chain reaction would set in which in practice would ultimately nullify the entire treaty system.

Nor can the concession of these reservations to Russia be in the interests of the Government to which you are accredited either, for their naval-political position, too, would be considerably altered were Russia to avail herself of the reservations. In this respect, too, reservation No. 4 is of particular importance. If, when the question is under discussion, the Government authorities at your end should voice any inclination to try to influence the British Government in the direction of causing the Russian reservations to be abandoned, then such an inclination may be cautiously encouraged. On the other hand, it must not be allowed to appear as if we were the instigators of any such action.

You should also bear in mind, when discussing this subject, that it is in no way in our interests for the Scandinavian countries to utilize the Russian reservations in order, for their part too, to be released from certain provisions of the London Naval Treaty.<sup>6</sup>

DIECKHOFF

<sup>5</sup> The original draft (see footnote 1 above) here read: "keeps to". Guse commented: "The size of cruisers of all categories is 10,000 tons until January 1, 1937. Only after the entry into force of the Three-Power Treaty will the size of the B-cruisers be set at 8,000 tons."

<sup>6</sup> The draft here continued: "It could be in the interests of Scandinavian countries, for example, to compensate for the disadvantages entailed by the Russian reservation by perhaps obtaining the right to construct large armoured coastal defence vessels (between 7,000–8,000 tons, with heavy guns, i.e., a category of vessels not envisaged in the Treaty). The construction of such vessels, like the construction by Denmark of a large number of monitors (under 8,000 tons), would alter the naval position in the Baltic to our disadvantage. Should the question of armoured coastal defence vessels be raised in this connexion, you should refer spontaneously to the difficulties which this would involve for the Treaty system as a whole." Guse requested the deletion of this passage and commented: "The High Command consider the naval rearmament of Sweden and Finland desirable, so that they shall be in a position to defend their neutrality against the Soviet Union. Therefore there are no objections to the construction of coastal defence vessels, of whatever size, by these countries. By contrast, it is not desirable for Denmark to be strengthened at sea in view of her key position on the entrances to the Baltic."



## No. 565

7529/E541424

*Memorandum by the Deputy Director of the Press Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 1, 1936.

zu P 7093<sup>1</sup> III.

Dr. Rost van Tonningen, the former League of Nations Commissioner in Vienna, whose visit had been announced by the German Legation at The Hague<sup>2</sup> and who had been specially commended to us by Ambassador von Papen,<sup>1</sup> called on me and made two requests:

As we knew, he had decided to take over the editorship of the periodical of the Mussert movement in Holland, and he wished to turn this periodical, now appearing only weekly, into a daily newspaper as soon as possible. For this purpose he needed a staff of reporters. As the financial basis of the newspaper was very weak, however, he was requesting our assistance, firstly for the maintenance of a correspondent in Berlin and secondly for providing a news service from Germany in case the Nederlandsch Vereenigde Persbureau (Netherlands News Agency) should for any reason refuse to make their news service available to him.

I clarified the questions involved in these two requests with M. Rost van Tonningen and then referred him to the Reich Ministry for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda, where, as he afterwards told me on the telephone, he found a very friendly welcome and a readiness to help.

Herewith to Senior Counsellor Katzenberger and Division Pol. II Nie.

W[OLF]

<sup>1</sup> P 7093 was a letter from Papen to Aschmann of Sept. 26 (7529/E541421-22). See also document No. 539.

<sup>2</sup> In a letter from Counsellor of Legation Feine of Sept. 25 (7529/E541423).

## No. 566

147/78422

*Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 2, 1936.

The Polish Ambassador called on me this afternoon and said that he had been instructed by [Foreign] Minister Beck to tell us that he was pleased to have brought the Lester affair to a successful conclusion. Lester had been appointed Deputy Secretary General of the League of Nations and would leave Danzig as soon as a successor was found.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Lester's appointment as joint Deputy Secretary General had been announced on Sept. 30; it was stated that he would remain in Danzig until the question of his successor had been settled.

As regards the question of a successor, M. Beck wished to let us know that this question would have to be studied in tranquillity during the next few weeks, and that M. Beck was counting on further cooperation on a basis of mutual confidence between the German and Polish Governments in this Danzig matter. The Ambassador made no allusion to the possibility of a Pole being considered for the post of League Commissioner.

I thanked M. Lipski for his information and said that a great deal would depend on finding a suitable man as successor to Lester.

DIECKHOFF

### No. 567

6417/E478667-80

*Ambassador Luther to Ministerialdirektor Ritter*

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 2, 1936.

Received October 13.

W VIIIa N.A. 1203.

DEAR HERR RITTER: With regard to the questions on economic policy outstanding between Germany and America, I have also approached Herr Schacht direct as it seemed to me to be particularly desirable to give him my personal exposition. This will of course at the same time serve as a report to the Foreign Ministry and as an account intended for you personally. I therefore enclose herewith a copy of my letter to Herr Schacht for you. Herr Dieckhoff has also received a copy.

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

I remain etc.,

LUTHER

[Enclosure]

WASHINGTON, D.C., October 2, 1936.

MY DEAR HERR SCHACHT: The developments in German-American economic relations compel me to approach you by addressing these lines to you personally and directly. I am very troubled. It is a possibility, or even a certainty, as I need hardly emphasize more explicitly to you, that we have reached a turning point. It may be that for years to come there will be only fragments left of what was once a flourishing German-American trade. It may be, though it need not be, that in the near future Hamburg and Bremen will be practically excluded from the North Atlantic freight traffic.

Since I have had the honour to be here, I have spoken to an enormous number of economists and politicians in public or private walks of life,

who came from Germany to see me. Over and over again I found that, by and large, they held two viewpoints.

One of these viewpoints is that our anti-Jewish policy makes an understanding with America impossible. This contains some truth in so far as this policy naturally makes an understanding here more difficult for us. Many visitors were often noticeably proud when they had discovered this truism. But, as always, it is dangerous to mix the true with the false. This is what is happening. Jewish influence is an impediment to us but—and I should like to place all possible stress on this—it is not so predominant as to make it impossible for us to have an understanding with the United States.

The other view is that every American Government has fundamentally rejected our National Socialist State and this so decisively that, to say the least, if this second viewpoint is added to the first, the result is to make further efforts on our part for an understanding appear hopeless. In this too there is an element of truth, and here again, because it is combined with some falsehood, it becomes doubly dangerous. For such arguments overlook the fact that, after all, there are also other States with non-democratic Governments and that they manage to cooperate with America quite happily. Certainly it is especially painful to a worthy American with a democratic outlook that it should be precisely a Germanic nation which has adopted a form of government so very different from the British or American.

But if we put the first and second viewpoints together they would still, even if we rate them very highly, only represent an adverse balance of less than fifty per cent against us. The remainder of over fifty per cent allows of certain possibilities.

These possibilities are naturally limited. And in a matter of weeks or months they may even have been narrowed down still further. If, in consequence of the currency devaluations in France,<sup>1</sup> etc., we should now be faced with stiffer competition from these countries in the American market and have to go still farther in adopting measures which the Americans describe as subsidies, a fresh storm might blow up.

Nor would it ever subside completely, since, generally speaking, so little favourable comment about America, such as might to some extent counteract the prevailing mood, reaches this country from Germany. This is true, even though precisely in this connexion dislike can turn almost to hatred when Western democracies *per se* are heaped with unfriendly epithets or are doomed inevitably to decay. Other conjectures or comments which one hears from Germany imply—even when no discussion of the form of government is involved—that, for instance, the United States are culturally inferior; or it may be suggested that

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<sup>1</sup> The devaluation of the franc had been announced on Sept. 25, 1936; see document No. 577, footnote 4.



they are on the point of succumbing either to a Negro ascendancy or to Communism. This sort of thing is not my concern in my present letter; from the German point of view this is certainly in great measure a case of the old truth that one gives as good as one gets. With regard to economic matters, one frequently hears from Germany that the economic recovery of the United States is due solely to artificial measures and will be a short-term one and that in fact America is quite especially responsible for all the confusion in economic policies. Again, I need not point out to you how much truth there is in this last passage. It does not, however, enhance the prospects of reaching a practical understanding with the United States. Apart from this, one can at least say that America's economic policy, however great its faults, has never been designed in any way deliberately to harm Germany in particular or to deal her a mortal blow. The devaluation of the dollar which followed the devaluation of the pound was, to put a figure on it, ninety per cent an American domestic measure of readjustment and, as such, is certainly effective.

In saying the foregoing I have already affirmed my belief that the present American economic revival is not founded on an artificial basis alone.<sup>2</sup> On the contrary, although the Government, as in other countries, have assisted, it is a genuinely organic process. That the American depression is over is no longer denied in any serious discussion here. The only point of controversy is over the actual extent of the remaining unemployment and whether it will now continue. In my view the progress made here, apart from a few exceptions, is exactly the same as in our own country.<sup>3</sup> Another point of controversy is whether the new prosperity has come in spite or because of the Government. In a certain sense both sides are right. The depression had gone so far here that it can be truly said that, in the case of America, it had reached bottom. According to all economic laws, there had to be an upward trend in America's economic system which constitutes almost a world in itself. But the fact that this occurred in so marked, indeed almost violent a fashion must indeed be attributed to the Government and to President Roosevelt himself. I venture to say we may reckon on the present situation being maintained for the next two or three years, if not on a continuation of the present upward trend.

Now, it is just at this stage that our trade with America is suffering the most serious blows. Unlike the years 1919 and 1920, when the whole of world trade had become disordered and when all, and not just some, states had to re-establish their economic relations which had been interrupted or disrupted by the war, we are today the only one amongst the large economic units to be "excluded [*ausgezingelt*]". For all the

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Correct, R[itter]."

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Ritter's handwriting: "I do not think so."



many justified complaints we could make about America in this connexion, yet many an action of our own has not proved altogether happy. I believe I may assume that you share my views to a considerable extent. There is just one point which I should like to stress, namely, that we only put forward to America positive trade proposals forming a basis for conversations on the strength of [the Foreign Ministry's] telegram No. 56 of March 29 last.<sup>4</sup> They were at once received by America, not only with sympathy but with an almost startling willingness to hold discussions on this basis.<sup>5</sup> The deadlock has arisen as a result of the unfortunate business of the "countervailing duties",<sup>6</sup> but the opening has not been lost, although one must add the rider that the repercussions of our attitude over the currency question on the situation here cannot yet be assessed. Before the German proposals were made, false hopes had been current, for instance to the effect that the Hull trade policy would not be carried out after all. I trust you will not take it amiss<sup>7</sup> if I recall in this connexion that the Embassy's reporting, both on the questions which arose when the dollar was devalued and in assessing Roosevelt's groundwork of legislation has been proved correct. The same applies to the view repeatedly put forward by the Embassy that there would be a new [favourable] trend in economic affairs; this view was disputed by New York bankers and American industrialists, who also gained the ear of many German authorities. In their assessment of the Hull trade policy, too, the Embassy reports have been proved right.<sup>8</sup>

I have read with profound disquiet the memorandum (despatch W VIII a N.A. 983 of September 17 last<sup>9</sup>) of an inter-departmental discussion held in Berlin on September 14, in which, amongst other things, questions were put on the basis of ideas such as whether American Treasury officials in Germany should be politely shown the door (I think this would be a great mistake, for German trade would then, in turn, be shown the door by the United States) or whether it would be tactically advisable to make this or that German declaration at this point. Matters have here long since passed beyond the scope of pure tactics. My colleagues and I time and again explain the economic facts affecting Germany and the fundamental principles of German economic thought to American Government authorities, to the press, to the general public and to anyone else in any way concerned.

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (5649/H003236-40); see also *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. II, pp. 221-222.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note in Ritter's handwriting: "?"

<sup>6</sup> The words "countervailing duties" are in English in the original.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Ritter's handwriting: "?"

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note: "Has never been doubted, R[itter]."

<sup>9</sup> Not printed (6420/E479367-74); this discussion was held between representatives of, amongst others, the Foreign Ministry, the Ministry of Economics, the Reich Office for Foreign Exchange Control and the Reichsbank; Dr. Becker, the Commercial Attaché in Washington, then on leave in Berlin, set forth the Embassy's views.

It is simply not true that there still exists or has existed for the last few years any ignorance or any doubt in the minds of leading Americans about Germany's economic policy. These people know it all inside out. It has sometimes seemed to me that the courtesy with which American politicians, economists, officials and so on have listened to renewed expositions of the German point of view has led visitors from Germany into the erroneous conclusion that they had been the first to bring America the true picture.<sup>10</sup> Admittedly, Americans too sometimes appear to indulge in fantasies. For instance, one now hears from allegedly reliable sources that certain firms, who are encouraged to export to the United States, have received promises that in compensation for the subsidies which have now ceased they will in a year or two's time be granted tax rebates. We must certainly not take it for granted that any measures taken by our bureaucracy will not eventually become known abroad.

The application of the anti-dumping regulations, etc., does not exclusively apply to us. For example, measures have also been adopted *vis-à-vis* Holland because Dutch farmers are receiving subsidies for the production of dried peas. The Attorney General's interpretation<sup>11</sup> of the regulation concerning the "countervailing duties" is certainly quite wrong according to what I have learned in the way of law, but it is in conformity with the methods of legal interpretation obtaining here and, in any case, there would appear to be no way of setting it aside. The legal provisions which, incidentally, are as much applicable to all other countries as to ourselves, can only be altered by Congress, that is to say, in practice they cannot be altered at present. Even the present Government, a Government who are, from the point of view of trade policy, the most favourable one imaginable in present circumstances, would not be able to obtain an alteration. We cannot expect from Landon,<sup>12</sup> Peek<sup>13</sup> and their fellows a fraction of what the Roosevelt Government promise to do, and have indeed already done, for world trade.

We are now confronted, first and foremost, with two problems of a practical nature.

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<sup>10</sup> Marginal note: "Davidsen and I realized immediately that the officials were fully informed. So did Puhl and Hartenstein. R[itter]." Senior Counsellor Davidsen accompanied Ritter to Washington in 1935 (see document No. 469, footnote 5). Reichsbankdirektor Puhl and Oberregierungsrat Hartenstein visited the United States in February 1936; see *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1936*, vol. II, pp. 213-214; documents on their mission have been filmed on Serial 5649.

<sup>11</sup> Evidently a reference to the opinion of the Attorney General (H. Cummings), 38 Op. Atty. Gen. 489, on which Treasury Decision 48360 (see document No. 469, footnote 6) was based.

<sup>12</sup> Alfred M. Landon, Governor of Kansas, Republican candidate for the presidency at the November 1936 elections.

<sup>13</sup> George N. Peek, special adviser to the President on foreign trade, 1934-1935, publicist on agricultural and foreign trade questions.

One is the commercial treaty. This can be concluded *only* on the basis of formal most-favoured-nation treatment. It might already have been concluded had we decided earlier to make a positive proposal. Today the situation has already become considerably less favourable, not only as a result of the developments over currency; it threatens to become steadily worse. The Americans seem to be losing interest in us. They doubt our desire and ability to bring our economic policy to some degree into line with that of the other great commercial Powers, especially now that France and Italy are promising to make a change, viewed with great satisfaction here, in their tariff and quota policy. The only way to resume conversations will be to content ourselves with formal recognition of the most-favoured-nation principle, whilst in practice considerable limitations or exceptions will have to be conceded to us. The former chief of the Commercial Treaties division of the State Department, who has, unfortunately, in the meantime been replaced,<sup>14</sup> had very clearly shown himself prepared for this. As this man's successor is still quite untried, nothing more can at present be said on this score.

The basic pre-condition for a commercial treaty will, however, be that we keep as much as possible of our trade in being during the next few months. For the Americans have already told us that they could not restore to us most-favoured-nation treatment, that is to say the possibility of increasing our imports into the United States, unless they could be reasonably sure that in return for this concession, which will be partially enjoyed in advance, we would, so to speak, be able to make a counter concession in the matter of the purchase of raw materials. The Americans know that they are, in fact, providers of foreign exchange<sup>15</sup> for Germany because, whilst we must, in any case, obtain from abroad our requirements in the raw materials concerned, yet it is in the United States alone, and nowhere else, that we can sell given quantities of German products earning foreign exchange. The Americans therefore, going on these facts, believe that Germany must furnish practical proof that she is still in a position not only to purchase, but also to pay for, somewhat larger quantities of raw materials in the United States. It is entirely erroneous to assert, for all certain German economists are in the habit of doing so, that the American producer of raw materials could force the American Government to give way to us. The American producer of raw materials is quite happy under this Government and, unfortunately, the American raw material trade can manage equally well without Germany. Painful though this admission may be, to think otherwise is merely to indulge in wishful thinking and hence in illusions or fancies.

<sup>14</sup> Harry C. Hawkins had succeeded Henry Grady as Chief of the Division of Trade Agreements in the State Department.

<sup>15</sup> Marginal note in Ritter's handwriting; "?"



The other practical problem is that of the "countervailing duties"<sup>6</sup> in other words, the question of what substitute can be found for the subsidies previously applied. The Embassy have for some time been raising the question of whether, in view of our currency position, and the formal legal position in America, the solution might not lie in a system which excluded any third party as the provider of so-called "subsidies" by creating a simpler bilateral relationship between exporter and importer. At least one member of the latest German Trade Delegation<sup>16</sup> to be sent here hit upon the same solution of his own accord, and most commendably refused to allow himself to be deflected from the purpose he had deliberately set himself by the bogies (although, as I have already said, they are not without substance) of the American attitude on the Jewish question or of the fundamentally differing forms of Government or of American ill will. No sooner had this much been achieved, than there came from Berlin an almost complete rejection of our proposals which, although by no means ideal, had seemed to us here reasonably useful as an expedient and which, above all, provided an opportunity of maintaining trade as much as possible during the next few months so that (as I have also already said) we might not lose every pre-requisite for a commercial treaty, which it would in any case be no small labour for either side to bring about.

I shall be leaving for Berlin in the middle of November and shall then of course come to see you as soon as possible. I should be very grateful to you if, in the event of any interim decisions being taken, you would lend your support to the ideas developed in this letter.

With cordial greetings,

Yours etc.,

LUTHER

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<sup>16</sup> For the members of this delegation and their discussions and proposals see document No. 503, footnote 6; the reference here is evidently to Counsellor Baer, whose proposals Luther had vigorously supported in telegram No. 227 of Aug. 27 (6420/E-479361-63).

## No. 568

1872/423812-14

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 185 of October 3

ROME, October 3, 1936—6:30 p.m.

Received October 3—10:00 p.m.

Pol. I 2400.

With reference to the Foreign Minister's instructions on the Five



Power Conference handed to me personally<sup>1</sup> and with reference to your telegram No. 232 of October 1.<sup>2</sup>

I arrived here yesterday evening and this morning I immediately had a conversation of some length with Ciano which is to be followed on Monday by a conversation with Mussolini; under reservation of this, I can already report as follows today:

First of all, I extended the invitation to Ciano in accordance with the instructions given to me; he accepted it with thanks, and agreed to the date, whilst leaving exact details of departure etc. to be fixed later. Without speaking of making the visit an impressive occasion, he, like Attolico, stressed the need for careful preparation of the conversations and of all communiques<sup>3</sup> to be published after the visit. As points, he mentioned the Five Power Pact (on which more below), the relations of the two countries to the League of Nations (I will go into this further with Mussolini), a defensive front against Bolshevism, an Italian declaration of sympathy with German colonial aspirations and German recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia. On the last point I remarked that he was of course aware of our readiness to do this which had been indicated months ago;<sup>4</sup> as Italy herself had not then thought the moment opportune, we had refrained and had adopted the practical course, on the lines suggested by the Italians, of turning our Legation into a Consulate; naturally the position today was no longer quite the same, as, in view of the Geneva attitude, express recognition appeared more difficult. Though Magistrati had suggested the expedient of styling Ciano in the communiqué as Minister of the Empire, certainly<sup>5</sup> I believed that our opinion was that recognition, if at a given moment and in agreement with Italy we considered it opportune, should also be expressly proclaimed. Ciano agreed with this. I then spoke in detail, in the sense of my instructions, on the Five Power Conference, to all of which Ciano declared that our views were basically in accord; he likewise warmly welcomed and shared our desire for coordination. As to the date, he said that he would prefer that the reply should be made only after our visit to Berlin; on my remarking that this might easily lend it the character of a joint *démarche*, he said that in the communiqué we could strongly stress our will to peace and faith in the old Locarno concept and prevent conveying the impression of German-Italian obstruction. To my statement about our attitude being in principle positive, he replied by emphasizing that the British Memorandum<sup>6</sup> was, at all events, an unsuitable basis and that, moreover,

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 558.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 562, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> The draft in the files of the Rome Embassy (M286/M011946-50) here reads: "a communiqué".

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 409.

<sup>5</sup> The Rome draft here reads: "yet I believed that . . ."

<sup>6</sup> Of Sept. 17; see document No. 546, enclosure.

fears that a negative attitude might lead to closer ties being formed between Britain and France, as also with the Soviet Union, were baseless, since in any case Britain and France certainly worked together; similarly France adhered with iron determination to her efforts to maintain the Pact with Soviet Russia and even to safeguard it further through Article 16 or the like. He greeted with extreme scepticism my suggestions about trends in France towards a loosening of the relationship with the Soviets, asserting that all his information confirmed that France was absolutely determined to maintain the Soviet Pact. Basically, he said, France's aim was to cause the new Locarno Pact to operate in the event of complications in the East as well. He agreed to our rejection of the British proposals under [paragraph] 5, point 1, particularly in view of the Italian dislike of Article 16. He was likewise in agreement with our rejection of the linking of the (group garbled)<sup>7</sup> Pact with the League. With regard to paragraph 4 of my instructions, Ciano stated most definitely that Italy wanted no regional pact and must also resist a Four Power Pact of Britain, Belgium, France and Germany, as it ran counter to the spirit of Locarno. Likewise Italy rejected a Five Power Pact with reciprocal guarantees. To my question as to whether Italy thought one could consider a division into two separate but linked guarantee pacts between Britain, Belgium, France and Germany and between France, Italy and Germany, he replied that this solution had not yet been exhaustively examined. No special sympathy was felt for this idea, however; it must continually be emphasized that the aim must be to restore the original basic principles of Locarno.<sup>8</sup>

HASSELL

<sup>7</sup> The Rome draft (M286/M011946-50) here reads: "Western Pact".

<sup>8</sup> For Ciano's memorandum on this conversation see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 82-84. (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 49-50.)

## No. 569

6782/E513219-21

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 3, 1936.

Pol. I 2256 g.

The Argentinian Ambassador<sup>1</sup> raised the following matter with me today:

(1) An Argentinian Government Mission, he said, had been negotiating here for some time with the firms of Krupp and Rheinmetall for the supply of a fairly large number of batteries, searchlights, listening

<sup>1</sup> Eduardo Labougle.

apparatus, etc. In the case of Rheinmetall the order involved was for approximately 2.5 million RM and in that of Krupp for about 5 million RM. All other details were as good as settled. However, the contract had so far failed to be concluded because these two firms insisted upon calculating the purchase price in pounds sterling and for this purpose on fixing the value of the pounds in gold. The Argentinian Mission was not authorised to agree to this. The Argentinian Government were in any case, within the clearing agreement,<sup>2</sup> already bearing the risk of a Mark surplus. It was therefore not understood in Buenos Aires why, conversely, Argentina should now guarantee the prices in gold.

The transactions concerned were only a beginning. Should a contract be signed, further orders up to a total value of 18 to 20 million RM could be expected. The Argentinian Ambassador asked us to mediate in order that agreement might be reached on the question of calculating the price.

(2) The Argentinian Government had recently asked the Reich Air Ministry to send a German air officer to Argentina as an instructor, but the Reich Air Ministry had refused this request, albeit in a very friendly manner. Moreover, the Argentinian Government had recently asked the Reich Air Ministry to allow an Argentinian officer, who was already in Germany, to attend the training school of the Luftwaffe. The Reich Air Ministry had indeed acceded to this request, but only for next year. A request that he might be admitted at once had also been refused by the Reich Air Ministry.

The Argentinian Ambassador asked that the attention of the competent authorities be drawn to the economic aspects of this matter as well. Experience had shown that whenever officers had been thus seconded, orders had subsequently been placed. Such Argentinian orders from Germany were important both for German exports and also for the purchase of raw materials from Argentina. He requested that this aspect of the matter should also be pointed out to the Reich Air Ministry. He had put the personnel matter before the Foreign Minister recently, and the latter had promised that he would raise it with Minister President Colonel General Göring. The Argentinian Ambassador wished, however, also to draw our attention to the economic nature of the matter.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> For the text of the German-Argentinian Trade and Payments Agreement of Sept. 28, 1934, see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1934, Pt. II, pp. 835-839. See also vol. III of this Series, document No. 492, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> Marginal note: "N.B. Negotiations on the transaction under (1) were begun before the foundation of the AGK [*Ausführungsgemeinschaft für Kriegsgerät*—Export Consortium for War Material]. The AGK has been informed. To H[err] v.d. Heyden, H[err] Schultzsponholz and Department (regarding point 2) for their information. To be filed (War Material, extra—European) W. Schm[ieden], Oct. 9." For the creation of the AGK see vol. IV of this Series, Editors' note, p. 791.



To be submitted to  
 Department Pol. IX,  
 Herr Benzler,  
 Herr von Schmieden,  
 Herr Fricke (please discuss).

ITTER<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> In a memorandum of Oct. 6 (5651/H004683-84) Ritter recorded a conversation with an officer of the Reich Air Ministry who confirmed the refusal to permit the Argentinian to attend the German Air Academy on the grounds that courses for foreign officers had not yet been arranged. An unsigned memorandum, W VIII b SA 1447 of Oct. 13 (5651/H004677-78) recorded a conversation with two representatives of the AGK on paragraph 1 of the document here printed; in a memorandum of Oct. 23 (5651/H004667) Counsellor of Legation Fricke noted that Krupp and Rheinmetall had withdrawn their demand for a guarantee in gold.

## No. 570

3987/E056252

*The Acting Director of the Political Department to the Consulate at  
 Geneva*

Telegram

No. 115

Drafting Officer:

Counsellor v. Schmieden

BERLIN, October 5, 1936—7:25 p.m.

zu Pol. I 2401, Ang. I.

With reference to your telegram No. 104.<sup>1</sup>

Should the British expert, in conversation with you, revert to the treatment of the question of the publication of armaments expenditure in the Third Committee, you should say that you are without instructions on this matter and that the German attitude so far on the question of armaments limitation is contained in the Führer's speech of May

<sup>1</sup> In his telegram No. 104 of Oct. 3 (3987/E056251) Krauel reported: "A British Delegation expert told me that the Third Committee would deal mainly with the question of the publication of armaments expenditure, and on this occasion asked what was Germany's attitude to the draft convention on this subject drawn up by the Disarmament Conference. I replied evasively that this draft convention had only been drawn up by the Disarmament Conference after Germany had withdrawn from the Conference and that therefore as far as I knew there had been no statement of German views upon it. Nevertheless, it seems to me that this enquiry from the British Delegation indicates that the British would like already now to allow for German collaboration at a later date, since numerous German statements have in fact been made on this question, the publication of armaments expenditure having been variously dealt with during the course of the Disarmament Conference. I request instructions on language to be held."

Marginal notes on this telegram read: (i) "No [attitude], as we were no longer taking part. Please instruct K[rauel] to make no comment and to refrain from any conversation on disarmament. v. N[eurath], Oct. 5." (ii) "To Pol. I; please submit to the Foreign Minister the instructions already sent to Krauel. W[eizsäcker], Oct. 8." The League Assembly's Third Committee (on the reduction and limitation of armaments) was re-constituted for the last time on Oct. 1, 1936; for its proceedings see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, Special Supplement No. 158, Records of the Seventeenth Ordinary Session of the Assembly, Minutes of the Third Committee. For the text of the Draft Convention of Dec. 17, 1934, see League of Nations: Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments: Publicity of National Defence Expenditure, Draft Convention prepared by the Technical Committee of the National Defence Expenditure Commission, Conf. D./C.G. 160 (1).



21, 1935,<sup>2</sup> and in the Peace Plan of March 31, 1936.<sup>3</sup>—As your personal opinion you may, if necessary, add that you could not imagine that this special aspect of the disarmament question would be under consideration in Berlin at this stage, and, furthermore, that it is obvious that Germany, if she subsequently took part in negotiations on the disarmament question, would have to reserve the right to examine all drafts which might have been prepared without her participation. You should say that it seems to you unreasonable to demand that Germany should already now make any statements concerning the hypothetical case of her participation at a later date.

WEIZSÄCKER

<sup>2</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 171.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 242

## No. 571

7790/E562904-20

*Note to the British Government*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 5, 1936.

[SK] 135 geh.

The German Government have taken note of the following Memoranda of His Britannic Majesty's Government and have examined them in detail:

Summary of the Results of the Anglo-Soviet Naval Discussions of July 29, 1936,<sup>2</sup>

British Memorandum of July 22, 1936, with Documents A, B and C.<sup>3</sup>

The information which His Britannic Majesty's Government have furnished to the Reich Government relating to certain building intentions of the USSR has evoked lively concern on the part of the Reich

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed is headed by a handwritten note: "Last version approved by the Führer on Oct. 3, 1936." Four earlier drafts of this Note have been found: The first (7790/E562841-56) is headed: "1st version. Approved by C.-in-C. Navy, and given to Amb[assador] v. R[ibbentrop]"; the second (7790/E562857-74), is headed: "2nd version. Approved in principle by Ambassador von Ribbentrop, minor alterations"; the third (7790/E562875-88) is headed: "3rd version. Approved in principle by the Führer at Nuremberg. M[össel], Sept. 16"; the fourth (7790/E562889-903), a fair copy of the third with minor additional amendments, mainly stylistic in character, has no heading.

No instructions for the communication of this Note have been found. A handwritten minute by M[össel], zu SK 135 geh. of Oct. 6 (7790/E562924), reads as follows: "The Note was sent to London by courier on Oct. 6, 1936, and communicated to the Foreign Office on Oct. 12, 1936. Despatch took place through the Foreign Ministry to the Chargé d'Affaires and the Attaché simultaneously; a covering letter with brief instructions for its communication was drawn up by the Foreign Ministry in agreement with Ambassador v. R[ibbentrop]." In circular telegram Pol. I 2579 of Oct. 14, 1936 (1622/388117-19) Weizsäcker informed the Missions in Washington, Tokyo, Paris, Rome, Moscow and Warsaw, Helsinki, Stockholm, Oslo and Copenhagen that the Note had been communicated to the Foreign Office on Dec. 12 by the Chargé d'Affaires and the Naval Attaché.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 486, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 470, enclosures and footnote 4 thereto.

Government. It must give rise to the gravest fears regarding the national security of Germany. The German Government hope that His Britannic Majesty's Government will make every endeavour to induce the USSR to renounce their far-reaching demands, which, moreover, are not in accordance with the provisions of the London Treaty of 1936.<sup>4</sup> The German Government are of the opinion that, should the USSR carry out this building plan, the result will be a violent and menacing disturbance of the naval equilibrium, which might compel the Reich Government to contemplate the possibilities provided for such eventualities.

The German Government are sincerely desirous of continuing to make a positive contribution to the pacification of Europe in that, even in the particularly unfavourable naval situation which the course of action projected by the USSR creates for Germany, they are prepared to conclude a bilateral *qualitative* agreement. They must, however, make their participation dependent upon acceptance of the reservations proposed in Section I (g), Nos. 1-4, which are requisite for safeguarding the threatened national security.

#### I. INFLUENCE OF THE ANGLO-SOVIET NAVAL AGREEMENT ON GERMANY'S NAVAL SITUATION

The Soviet Union's Far Eastern fleet—an integral part of the Soviet fleet—has not been bound by a qualitative limitation. The German Government have repeatedly stated that an obligation of *the same nature* upon the USSR is a pre-condition for the conclusion of a qualitative agreement with His Britannic Majesty's Government on the basis of the London Treaty of 1936. This similarity of obligation is traversed by the USSR's reservations. If the Anglo-Soviet naval agreement is concluded in the terms of the existing draft, the German naval situation will undergo a significant deterioration.

##### (a) *Concentration of the Several Portions on the Soviet Fleet in European Waters.*

A close connexion exists between the several portions of the Soviet fleet. It must be regarded as one single whole. Moreover, the German Government regret that, after the conclusion of the Franco-Soviet military alliance, they must also regard the French and Soviet navies as a single entity in the event of war.

The Soviet Union can at any time concentrate the several portions of their fleet. The Far Eastern fleet, or parts thereof, can without any special difficulties be detached to European waters in times of political tension. This transfer is the more easy to effect when, in virtue of the Franco-Soviet military alliance, the French bases in Indo-China, the Red Sea and the Mediterranean are available to the Soviet Fleet. The

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 304.

provisions dealing with the exchange of information in relation to "vessels, which are *transferred* from the Far Eastern fleet to the European fleet", prove that a *transfer* of parts of the Far Eastern fleet is contemplated by the Soviet Union themselves.

Moreover, consequent on the fortification of the Dardanelles, the Black Sea fleet is no longer confined to the Black Sea, in view of the Turkish-Soviet Pact of Friendship of 1925<sup>5</sup> and the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance. Hitherto it has been needed in the Black Sea to protect Soviet interests and to guard the coast. Now Turkey can close the Dardanelles for the benefit of the Soviet Union. In that case the Black Sea fleet is free and can be employed at other points of the Soviet Empire without any military disadvantages necessarily ensuing in the Black Sea.

The new terms about [rights of] passage also tend in the same direction in the event of war, namely, they signify the closure of the Dardanelles to non-riparian States.

It must also be taken into account that portions of the Soviet Far Eastern or Black Sea fleet will be placed at the disposal of France in the Mediterranean, so that French forces in corresponding strength are set free for the Northern theatre of war.

His Britannic Majesty's Government could with the same right and with the same reasons as the USSR exclude from qualitative limitation their naval forces in the Far East. They have, however, regarded the safety clauses as sufficient to meet a threat to their national security.

The German Government cannot recognize that this solution for safeguarding national security, which satisfies all the other contracting parties, does not also suffice the USSR, and they must therefore draw the appropriate conclusions.

#### (b) *New Constructions for the Far Eastern Fleet*

The shipyards of the USSR in the Far East only permit of the construction of smaller craft. Fighting units for the Far East will consequently be built mainly in the Soviet Union's Baltic shipyards or in other European yards. The ships are, therefore, in European waters until their final acceptance and the completion of all their trial voyages. The trial voyages can be delayed at will so that the Soviet Union has the possibility of retaining vessels which have been constructed for the Far East in European waters for a considerable time, and especially when the situation is politically uncertain.

#### (c) *The USSR's armament at Sea*

The Soviet Union have built up their army and air arm within a short period and with an enormous outlay in personnel and material. The building up of the Soviet fleet has been taken in hand with a tremendous

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 459, footnote 6.



concentration of labour. In the course of the negotiations His Britannic Majesty's Government have several times stated that the building up of the Soviet fleet would not proceed particularly rapidly. According to the view of the German Government this opinion is not well founded. The efforts of the USSR to improve their naval armaments have achieved noticeable success in a short time. Thus, for example, the Soviet Union already possess 120 submarines ready for action and a number of further submarines are under construction. Similar results must be expected as regards the construction of the other classes of vessels. According to reliable reports, warships are being built for the USSR not only in shipyards of the Soviet Union, but also in the yards of other European countries.

In this connexion it may be pointed out that according to the reservation in section I of the Summary of Results of the Anglo-Soviet Naval Discussions, the USSR even have the right to construct in Europe (Baltic shipyards) for the Far East any type of ship *without* qualitative restrictions.

(d) *Armament of Soviet Union Capital Ships*

In virtue of the Franco-Soviet Military Alliance, Germany must in the event of war count upon the USSR *and* France being her opponents. Consequently Germany, on the basis of the building intentions of France and the USSR which have so far become known, must reckon in future with at least four modern French battleships and an undetermined number of modern Soviet battleships, two of which carry 15-inch or 16-inch guns. The German Government would regard it as an unjustified limitation if in addition to quantitative inferiority there were also inferiority in the armament of German battleships. Should the USSR obtain the right to arm the new battleships which it is proposed to build with guns of a bigger calibre than 14 inches, Germany must draw the appropriate conclusions in respect of the armament of her battleships.

If all the signatories of the Washington Treaty of 1922<sup>6</sup> adhere to the provisions of Article 4 (2) of the London Agreement of 1936, and the said provisions thereby enter into force, the German Government must insist on a reduction of the armament of the Soviet Union's battleships from 16-inch to 15-inch guns, if it does not prove possible to induce the USSR to accept the 14-inch calibre.

(e) *Building Holiday for A-class Cruisers*

In accordance with the London Treaty of 1930,<sup>7</sup> Article 16, and the

<sup>6</sup> The Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armament, signed at Washington on Feb. 6, 1922, by representatives of the British Empire, France, Italy, Japan and the United States. For the text see *B.F.S.P.*, vol. 117, pp. 453-70.

<sup>7</sup> See document No. 309, footnote 8.



London Treaty of 1936, Article I B (3), cruisers with 7.1-inch guns, whatever their size, are A-class cruisers or light surface vessels of Sub-Category (a).

In their Note of June 9, 1936,<sup>8</sup> the German Government have declared themselves ready, in the event of France and the USSR building no further A-class cruisers before the new treaty comes into force, to forgo the construction of the fourth and fifth A-class cruisers to which Germany is still entitled under the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.<sup>9</sup> His Britannic Majesty's Government themselves proposed this reservation in the course of the negotiations and recognized it when the German Note of June 9, 1936, was presented.

The USSR at present have A-class cruisers under construction, and intend to build further A-class cruisers even after the commencement of the building holiday for A-class cruisers provided for other countries. Thus, under section IV of the Summary of the Anglo-Soviet Naval Discussions an exception is to be made in favour of the Soviet Union regarding the construction of A-class cruisers after the entry into force of the London Treaty of 1936, although the signatories of the London Treaty of 1936 and Germany have declared their readiness to consent to a building holiday. The Reich Government cannot recognize this exception as justified. Furthermore, they cannot recognize that the insistence of the Soviet Union on the 7.1-inch calibre is a cogent reason for the Soviet attitude, because 6-inch guns were formerly widely used in the Russian navy, both in ships of the line and in cruisers.

The Reich Government hope that His Britannic Majesty's Government may yet succeed in inducing the USSR, too, to accept without reservations the building holiday for A-class cruisers. Should, however, the Soviet reservation be maintained, the German Government to their regret would find themselves compelled to draw the appropriate conclusions.

(f) *Article 19 of the London Treaty*

In the narrow waters of the Baltic Sea minor war vessels play a specially important role in naval warfare. The auxiliary vessels of the Soviet Union are just as important for supply and the transport of troops in European waters.

By exempting the Soviet Union from the exchange of information regarding these vessels, the possibility arises that, in these two categories of vessels, the naval armaments and *potentiel de guerre* of the USSR at sea may be strengthened in a manner quite incapable of supervision. In this connexion attention is drawn to the importance of,

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<sup>8</sup> See documents Nos. 361 and 366.

<sup>9</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 156.

for example, the troopships and tankers of the Soviet Union for the French conduct of war. The German Government cannot recognize the validity of the exceptions conceded to the Soviet Union. Should the latter insist on them, Germany must likewise be exempted from the exchange of information in regard to these classes of ships.

(g) *Reservations*

As set forth above, the Soviet Union's attitude gives rise to a number of new factors which the German Government must, in view of the threat to their national security, take into consideration by making reservations for the event of the USSR insisting on their demands.

*PROPOSAL FOR THE TEXT OF THE RESERVATIONS*

1. *Reservations in Consequence of the Soviet Far Eastern Fleet not being subject to Restriction.*

(aa) His Britannic Majesty's Government undertake, as soon as the Soviet Government have notified them that they are departing from the treaty provisions and are resuming their full liberty of action, immediately so to inform the German Government.

(bb) The German Government shall then equally receive the right to depart from the qualitative provisions of the treaty in respect of vessels then under construction or to be laid down in future.

(cc) In such event Germany, like the USSR, will be relieved of the procedure of consultation and the three months' prior notification under Article 25 of the London Treaty of 1936.

(dd) The exchange of information with His Britannic Majesty's Government will not be affected.

2. *Reservation in Consequence of the Armament of the Soviet Union's Capital Ships yet to be constructed with a larger Calibre of Gun than is provided for by Treaty.*

Should the Soviet Government receive the right, contrary to the provisions of the London Treaty of 1936, Article 4, paragraph 2, to arm two capital ships with a gun calibre exceeding 14 inches, Germany will claim the right to arm the capital ships to which she is entitled by treaty with a calibre of gun exceeding 14 inches even after the entry into force of the above-mentioned section of the London Treaty of 1936. In such an event the German Government will limit themselves to a maximum calibre of 15 inches.

3. *Reservation in Consequence of the Non-Observance by the USSR of the Building Holiday for A-class cruisers.*

The German Government shall recover their freedom of action in regard to the construction of A-class cruisers even after the entry into force of the new naval agreement.

As soon as they deem it necessary to make use of their liberty of action, they will so inform His Britannic Majesty's Government.

4. *Reservation in Consequence of the Non-Application of Article 19 of the London Treaty of 1936 by the Soviet Union.*

So long as the Soviet Government do not make the notification provided for in Article 19 of the London Treaty in respect of minor war vessels and auxiliary vessels, the German Government will not supply information in this connexion either and will not request the same from His Britannic Majesty's Government.

From the moment when the USSR apply the provisions of Article 19, the German Government, too, will proceed accordingly.

II. OBSERVATIONS ON THE BRITISH MEMORANDUM  
OF JULY 22, 1936

(a) *Re paragraphs 2-3.*

In paragraph 1 of their Memorandum of May 4, 1936,<sup>10</sup> the German Government expressed the view that the provisions of the qualitative agreement should only apply to those ships and smaller vessels laid down after its entry into force.

They agree to the clause proposed by His Britannic Majesty's Government (Document C, Article 30) regarding the entry into force of the agreement if the clause is supplemented in accordance with the above observation.

If His Britannic Majesty's Government do not consider it appropriate to supplement Article 30 in this sense, the German Government agree to a corresponding point being included in the final protocol.

(b) *Re paragraphs 4-5.*

They agree to the proposed recast formula respecting the age of capital ships.

(c) *Re paragraph 6.*

They are in agreement with paragraph 8 of the British Memorandum of May 13, 1936,<sup>11</sup> respecting the maintenance of building possibilities in the quantitative sphere as they existed at the time of the conclusion of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.

(d) *Re paragraphs 7-11.*

It is a matter of importance to the German Government that the provisions of Paragraph 2 (c) of the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, should not be affected by Article 26 of the London Naval Treaty. His Britannic Majesty's Government's statement in

<sup>10</sup> Document No. 309.

<sup>11</sup> Document No. 323, enclosure 2.

paragraph 11 of their Memorandum of July 22, 1936, is regarded as an adequate assurance to this effect, and special mention in the final protocol is therefore waived.

It should be observed in regard to the concluding sentence of paragraph 11 of the British Memorandum that, so long as the new qualitative agreement possesses the character of a bilateral agreement between Great Britain and Germany, the exchange of information likewise applies as between these two countries only.

(e) *Re paragraph 12.*

In making their proposal for advance communication of the British tonnage figure over longer periods of time, the German Government had mainly in mind tonnage which, being in excess of replacement tonnage, would render possible additions to the German navy by way of fresh construction. They agree to His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposal whereby they will be confidentially informed, from 1942 onwards, at least two years in advance, of the estimated British tonnage figures. They further note that His Britannic Majesty's Government will give as much advance notice as possible should there be any modification in any particular forecast during the period for which it has been given.

As the arrangement respecting the advance communication of British tonnage refers exclusively to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, it is proposed that this point shall not be included in the final protocol but in the supplementary protocol to this Agreement (Document A).

On the other hand, the arrangement in paragraph 13 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936, which refers exclusively to the qualitative agreement, should be included in the final protocol as proposed by His Britannic Majesty's Government.

(f) *Re paragraph 13.*

The proposed arrangement is agreed, whereby His Britannic Majesty's Government declare their readiness, in the event of the naval construction contained in any British annual programme upsetting the long-term forecast of naval strength on which the German Government are working, to communicate their intentions confidentially to Germany in sufficient time to enable the latter to make the necessary adjustments before the German annual programme is made public.

(g) *Re paragraph 14.*

His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposal is agreed, whereby Document A constitutes the additional protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, and contains both the points specified in the draft of Document A as well as those in paragraphs 5



and 6 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936. The stipulations and reservations required for the qualitative agreement are to be dealt with in a protocol on the conclusion of the negotiations.

(h) *Re paragraph 15.*

The German Government await an invitation to sign an appropriate protocol.

(i) *Re paragraph 16.*

Attention is invited to the remarks under sections I (e) and I (g) 3 of the present German Memorandum.

(k) *Re paragraphs 17 and 18.*

The Reich Government agree that, in accordance with His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposal, the agreement to be concluded shall take the form of an inter-governmental treaty.

### III. VIEWS ON DOCUMENT A

*Additional Protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935.*

The wording of Document A is agreed. It will be necessary to supplement the Document by the undermentioned points in accordance with His Britannic Majesty's Government's proposals:

(1) Formula regarding the age of capital ships (paragraph 5 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936).

(2) Maintenance of quantitative construction possibilities (paragraph 8 of the British Memorandum of May 13, 1936, and paragraph 6 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936).

(3) Arrangement regarding the advance communication of the estimated British tonnage figures from 1942 onwards (paragraph 12 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936).

### IV. VIEWS ON DOCUMENT B

See observations under section II (k). Paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 agreed.

### V. VIEWS ON DOCUMENT C<sup>12</sup>

*Qualitative Treaty*

*Re Article 30*

Attention is invited to the observations under II (a) of the present German Memorandum (see also VI (a)).

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<sup>12</sup> See document No. 470, footnote 4.

VI. PROPOSAL IN REGARD TO THE FINAL PROTOCOL IN  
ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH 18 OF THE BRITISH  
MEMORANDUM OF JULY 22, 1936

The German Government propose that the following points shall be included in the final protocol:

(a) The agreement to apply to all vessels and craft laid down after its entry into force, should this provision not have been inserted in Document C, Article 30.

(b) Readiness on the part of His Britannic Majesty's Government to communicate alterations which affect the annual German programme in sufficient time to enable them still to be taken into account (British Memorandum of July 22, 1936, paragraph 13).

(c) Reservations in consequence of the non-limitation of the Soviet Far Eastern fleet as contained in section I (g), 1, sub-paragraphs (aa)-(dd), of the present German Memorandum.

(d) Reservation regarding capital ship gun calibres in consequence of the armament of Soviet capital ships yet to be constructed with guns having a calibre exceeding 14 inches. The present German Memorandum, section I (g), 2.

(e) Reservation regarding the construction of A-class cruisers on account of the non-observance of the building holiday by the USSR. The present German Memorandum, section I (g), 3.

(f) Reservation regarding the application of Article 19 on account of the Soviet Government's proceedings. The present German Memorandum, section I (g), 4.

No. 572

1499/370352-56

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram by Special Courier

No. 189

ROME, October 5, 1936.

Received October 6—3:00 p.m.

[Pol. IV 3489].<sup>1</sup>

[Pol. I 2446].<sup>2</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 185 of October 3.<sup>3</sup> This evening I had a conversation of some length with Mussolini, on which I have the following to report:

<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (1528/373834-37).

<sup>2</sup> Taken from another copy (1872/423819-23).

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 568.

(1) After expressing pleasure at the Italians' participation at the Party Rally and stressing the Führer's desire for trustful cooperation with Mussolini, I told him that the Führer was ready, should Italy withdraw from the League of Nations as a result of the League's attitude in the Abyssinian question, to declare Germany's previously proclaimed readiness to re-enter the League of Nations no longer to hold good. I added that, for the moment, this communication was academic in character, since Italy probably did not intend to withdraw from the League. Mussolini replied that he took note of my communication with warm gratitude and requested that this be conveyed to the Führer. The Geneva resolutions about the Abyssinian representation at the League had, in fact, been so mildly worded that they afforded no direct occasion for withdrawing from the League. All the same the question remained completely open, since he continued to regard the League of Nations as an instrument of Western democracy and Freemasonry, with which it might at any moment become impossible to co-operate.

(2) I then said that the Führer was inclined, should Madrid fall, to recognize the National Government *de facto*, in so far as agreement could be reached with Italy on a similar procedure. Portuguese cooperation was desirable, but not essential. Mussolini assented and stated the Italian view to be that, in the event of the capture of Madrid, Italy and Germany should reach agreement as to the form in which sympathy and formal or *de facto* recognition could be expressed to the Nationalist Government; the despatch of Ambassadors to Madrid could also be considered.<sup>4</sup>

(3) I informed Mussolini that I had been instructed to resume the conversation about the coordination of German-Italian economic policy in the Danubian Basin, and very briefly outlined the main points of view (your despatch W III SE 2804 of August 31).<sup>5</sup> Mussolini responded to this with great animation and asked me to go into the details thoroughly with Ciano in the near future. There was, he said, still much for both countries to do there in the economic field, both were in similar geographical positions in relation to it and could together forestall undesirable influences and developments; on the other hand, efforts were being made to drive a wedge between Italy and Germany at precisely this point; now that political agreement had been reached over Austria, there was nothing more to prevent effective consultation between us on economic policy in the South East. At this point I took the opportunity to speak in the sense of your despatch IV 2882 of September 12,<sup>6</sup> whereupon Mussolini declared that relations with Yugoslavia had in fact improved somewhat and that, in any case,

<sup>4</sup> See also Series D, vol. III, document No. 95.

<sup>5</sup> Document No. 523.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 534.

where economic policy was concerned, intentions on the Italian side were of the best. However, in this question Italy was somewhat bound to Hungary, who was firmly convinced that it was impossible to separate Yugoslavia from the Little Entente. He could not orientate Italian policy towards the States of the Little Entente without considering Hungary, but he agreed with me that even though it would probably be impossible to detach Yugoslavia altogether, yet, in view of Yugoslavia's anti-Soviet attitude and the estimable personality of Stojadinović, it might perhaps be possible somewhat to loosen her ties with the Little Entente.

(4) The British Memorandum.<sup>7</sup> I spoke in much the same terms as I had to Ciano, although rather more briefly, emphasizing our adherence to the old Locarno concept, but at the same time the necessity of making some positive reply to the Memorandum in the near future. I further stressed in the course of the conversation that it would be well squarely to face the possibility of Britain's inviting us to accede to a Four Power Pact without Italy. Our desire that Italy should continue to participate remained unaltered; but we had, from the tactical angle, to avoid appearing in the rôle of scapegoat. Mussolini replied that the British Memorandum could not provide a suitable basis and that, moreover, it no longer had anything to do with the old basic concept of Locarno. Britain, who could in no circumstances be separated from France and who was, besides, to a remarkably large extent dominated by Jewish influence, proceeded from the view that Germany and Italy, as disturbing elements, should be chained up (Mussolini used the expression "bottled up"), i.e., ourselves on the Rhine and Italy in the Mediterranean, this by means of pacts, harmless in appearance, but full of snares. France, however, as Ciano had already told me, adhered absolutely, in spite of all counter currents, to the linking of Eastern with Western questions and to the Russian Pact. The correct tactics, Mussolini stressed, for avoiding, on the one hand, commitments dangerous for Germany and Italy and, on the other, the rôle of scapegoat, would be to adhere adamantly to the basic concept of the old Locarno Treaty, which, since it was sensibly limited to one region, namely, the West, constituted an effective safeguard against the danger of war, in the form of a system which, including as it did the four Western Great Powers, was truly balanced: by the non-inclusion of Italy this balance would be completely destroyed. It was for this reason that the Führer had repeatedly stressed the need for Italian participation in Western settlements. As Mussolini conveyed pretty plainly that he would for the present prefer to reply not at all, or quite evasively, I again stressed the need for a concrete answer. At the same time I

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<sup>7</sup> Of Sept. 17; see document No. 546, enclosure.



referred to various reports (your telegrams No. 236 of October 3<sup>8</sup> and No. 237 of October 4<sup>9</sup>) according to which the Italian Government's attitude was not considered in Geneva and Paris to be as intransigent as it appeared on the surface. Mussolini, who had read similar reports in the press, declared that all such assertions were lies. Not a syllable in this sense had the Italians uttered. Italy was opposed to the new British plan and would continue to be so opposed even if this new travesty of Locarno were to be divided into two parts, i.e., into a northern Four Power Pact and a southern Three Power Pact. The reports were malicious propaganda of the same ilk as the continuous reports which the Italians were receiving that Germany was not playing straight with Italy. In any case, Mussolini declared, Italy did not want to reply until after Ciano's visit to Berlin. We could consult further together beforehand. On my remarking that today's devaluation of the Italian currency<sup>10</sup> could be interpreted as a *rapprochement* with the Western Powers, he firmly denied this, and said that the devaluation was being effected autonomously without consultation with any other Powers and under the pressure of dire necessity. With all the surrounding towers collapsing, Italy was not strong enough to remain in lonely eminence as the only tower still standing. I replied that in that case we should have to undertake this rôle alone; our position, however, was somewhat different, and we could see no advantage in a devaluation, at least so long as there was in fact no thought on the other side of firm mutual stabilization.

From my conversations with Ciano beforehand and subsequently, the following is worth mentioning: Ciano, with equal vigour, denied all reports alleging a more amenable attitude on Italy's part towards the British Memorandum. With regard to the Memorandum itself, he suggested a conversation within the next few days with the heads of political departments [of the Italian Foreign Ministry], who had in their possession all kinds of interesting confidential material, especially on the French attitude. I will arrange for this conversation as soon as

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<sup>8</sup> This telegram (7443/E540273-74) repeated to Rome the text of telegram No. 94 of Oct. 2 from the Legation in Belgrade, which reads: "The State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, Martinać, asked me to come and see him today in order to inform me, in confidence and with a view to its onward transmission of the following telegram from the Yugoslav representative at Geneva: 'Geneva, Sept. 30. Two days ago Mussolini intimated to Britain and France that Italy would take part in the Locarno Conference regardless of the recognition of the Abyssinian mandates [*sic*] and without making German acceptance an express condition. This speaks for itself. Purić.'"

<sup>9</sup> This telegram (5949/E437743) reads: "The French Chargé d'Affaires here asserted, during a conversation on the Five Power Pact, that in Paris they had reason to believe that the Italian Government, under marked British influence, had already become fairly amenable and scarcely seemed to be resisting any longer even the British idea of a triangular mutual assistance arrangement of London-Paris-Berlin. Weizsäcker." Weizsäcker recorded this conversation with Arnal in a memorandum of Oct. 3 (3317/E007779).

<sup>10</sup> On Oct. 5, 1936, the Lira was devaluated by about 41 per cent to a rate of 90 to the pound sterling.

possible.<sup>11</sup> With regard to the visit to Berlin, Ciano said—after, as it seemed to me, having sought Mussolini's views—that it would perhaps after all be better not to publish any detailed communiqué mentioning the five points, but only one of a rather more general character. The conversation on the five points and other matters could best be set down in a protocol confined to ourselves. As to the date [of the visit], it seems, particularly as my attendance is desired, that departure from here by air on October 20 would be expedient, since Himmler's visit here, with a great police parade, is set for October 18, and the Duke of Coburg's visit with the inauguration of the Bibliotheca Hertziana's new building, for October 19. I would request further instructions as to the official aspect of the visit on this basis.

HASSELL

<sup>11</sup> Hassell forwarded a memorandum on this conversation, which took place on Oct. 6 and was recorded by Plessen, with despatch 4589 of Oct. 7 (1872/423827-32).

## No. 573

3631/E028195-96

*The Acting Director of the Political Department to the Consulate General  
in Danzig*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, October 6, 1936—9:40 p.m.

No. 22

zu Pol. V 406,<sup>1</sup> Ang. I.

Drafting Officer: Senior Counsellor Dr. Schliep

Now that the Polish Government have been charged by the Council's resolution to seek means of putting an end to the conditions described in Lester's report<sup>2</sup> and thus of rendering the League of Nations' guarantee fully effective,<sup>3</sup> it seems necessary to ascertain forthwith what objectives the Danzig Government are pursuing in domestic and foreign policy and what desiderata we may expect the Poles to have. Since measures taken by the Danzig Government may have repercussions on German-Polish relations, you should [as] promptly [as possible] get into

<sup>1</sup> Pol. V 4061 (1723/399698-701) is report I G 1249 of Oct. 5, under which the Consulate General in Danzig transmitted copies of a communication of Oct. 2 from the Secretary General of the League to the President of the Danzig Senate, asking whether the Government of the Free State of Danzig wished to send a representative to the League Council's discussion on the report of the Council's Committee of Three on Danzig and on the appointment of a new High Commissioner, and of Greiser's reply of Oct. 5 declining the League's invitation.

<sup>2</sup> For the text of Lester's report of Sept. 12 see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, pp. 1359-1381.

<sup>3</sup> For the text of the Council's resolution of Oct. 5, inviting Poland to seek means of putting an end to the situation described in Lester's report and of rendering fully effective the League's guarantee, see *ibid.*, p. 1191.

touch with the Senate and the Gauleiter and]<sup>4</sup> ascertain more about the Danzig intentions and the views held there as to what the Polish attitude is likely to be. You should also ascertain how the Senate propose to behave in face of the steps Poland may be expected to take in executing the task entrusted to her by the League. As regards a successor to Lester, it seems to me desirable that in this matter too the Senate should only express their views to Poland after they have consulted with the Reich Government.<sup>5</sup>

You should report by telegram.

WEIZSÄCKER<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The words printed in square brackets were deleted before despatch.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 566, footnote 1. According to a memorandum by Schliep of September 30 (1723/399668-69), the Consul in Geneva had that day telephoned a report of a conversation that Böttcher had had with Eden on Danzig matters, in the course of which Eden had stated that the Danzig Government would be heard before a new High Commissioner was appointed.

<sup>6</sup> The text of the document here printed was repeated by Weizsäcker to Warsaw in telegram No. 112 of Oct. 6 (7586/E543238-39) with the following additional instructions: "You should attempt to ascertain more about the question of how the Poles will proceed in their performance of the task entrusted to them by the League of Nations, and if necessary report by telegram, also on your views as to what Danzig's attitude ought to be."

## No. 574

3406/E013752-55

*Reichsbank President Schacht to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff*

BERLIN, October 6, 1936.

Pol. II 2207.

DEAR HERR DIECKHOFF: I enclose a copy of a letter from Minister President Blum of September 26 together with my reply of today's date for your information, and request you to have the reply transmitted through our Embassy.<sup>1</sup>

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

HJALMAR SCHACHT

[Enclosure 1]<sup>2</sup>

PARIS, September 26, 1936.

Mr. MINISTER: In my letter of September 9,<sup>3</sup> confirming our agreement on the course to be followed in developing our conversations,<sup>4</sup> I pointed out to you my reasons for wishing personally to speak to Mr. Eden on the matter on his way through Paris.

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "Dir[ector] Pol[itical] Department please take further action. D[ieckhoff], Oct. 7."

<sup>2</sup> This enclosure is in French in the original.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Schacht visited Paris Aug. 25-27, 1936; see also vol. I of Series D, document No. 56.

I saw Mr. Eden on September 20.<sup>5</sup> During this confidential conversation I found him as anxious as I am to neglect nothing in studying the conditions for an effective European settlement. He was accordingly much interested in the overtures of which I informed him. But the very scope and range of the suggestions involved naturally called for a closer study on his part from which no conclusions could be drawn except in full accord with the Prime Minister. As regards colonial affairs in particular, Mr. Eden could not fail to recall to me the statements he had himself made in the House of Commons at the end of July,<sup>6</sup> in which he defined the position of the British Government.

Such was the general tenor of our conversation. In a letter from Geneva of September 23, which reached me yesterday, Mr. Eden confirmed that by very reason of the importance of the questions raised it was impossible for him to give me a definitive expression of his Government's views until he had been able to have a thorough discussion with Mr. Baldwin and his colleagues.

I have no doubt that all relevant information on this subject will be communicated to me shortly after Mr. Eden returns to London. I believe that in the meantime you will agree with me that we should continue, along the lines that we have agreed together, to seek the conditions most likely to foster the chances of success of our common effort with a view to achieving a lasting reconciliation and peace.

I remain, etc.,

LÉON BLUM

[Enclosure 2]

BERLIN, October 6, 1936.

DEAR MINISTER PRESIDENT: I must not fail to thank you for your kind information regarding the state of the matter discussed between us. I shall look forward with interest to your further information and hope, as you do, that our common efforts will succeed in achieving a practical result which will secure peace in Europe.

I remain, etc.,

DR. HJALMAR SCHACHT

<sup>5</sup> On his way to Geneva Eden had a private conversation with Blum in Paris on Sept. 20, 1936, about which no communiqué was published; see *The Times*, Sept. 21, 1936. See also The Earl of Avon: *The Eden Memoirs, Facing the Dictators* (London, 1962), p. 502.

<sup>6</sup> In his statement on foreign policy on July 27, 1936; for the text see *Parl. Deb., H. of C.*, vol. 315, cols. 1116-1139.



## No. 575

1723/399755-56

*The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

URGENT

Telegram

No. 31 of October 7

DANZIG, October 7, 1936—5:30 p.m.

Received October 7—7:00 p.m.

Pol. V 4135.

With reference to your telegram No. 22 of October 6.<sup>1</sup>

I) As the President of the Senate was unavailable, I discussed the matter immediately with Staatsrat Böttcher. He stated at the outset that the Senate would naturally take no steps whatsoever without getting into touch with the Reich Government. This applies especially to the question of Lester's successor.<sup>2</sup> As to what desiderata the Poles may be expected to have, important indications have already emerged from yesterday's conversation between Greiser and Papée, which took place at Beck's desire. In the course of this, Papée, as usual, laid particular emphasis on Beck's great exertions in Geneva; he further declared that Poland was disinterested in internal political developments in Danzig provided that Polish rights were safeguarded, and stressed that one should refrain, as much as possible, from anything directed against the person or the institution of the High Commissioner, so as to avoid aggravating the question of prestige. It is to be noted that Papée twice remarked that he did not want to be precipitate in the negotiations with Danzig. A detailed minute on the conversation is being despatched by airmail at 3:15 p.m.<sup>3</sup> Apart from this, Böttcher thinks that the Polish desiderata will also undoubtedly extend to the question of minorities and to the field of economics.

With regard to the aims of the Danzig Government in the field of domestic and foreign policy, these are not definite so far. Böttcher hopes to be able to provide further information tomorrow, but emphasizes that contact with Berlin is proposed, presumably a discussion with Minister President Göring and consultations with the Foreign Ministry. Böttcher denied that decrees about banning the opposition parties had already been drawn up or measures against the Jews prepared. Böttcher explained the proceedings taken against the Social Democrats (report IG 1246 of October 5)<sup>4</sup> as being based on discoveries of arms. As regards Lester, he said that the Senate would

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 573.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 573, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> In report IG 1268 of Oct. 7, Eckner forwarded a minute by Greiser of Oct. 6 (1723/399758-62).

<sup>4</sup> Not printed (7590/E543468). This despatch reported that various officials of the Social Democratic Party in Danzig had been arrested by the Danzig police.

endeavour to exclude him, as hitherto, from questions of internal policy.

II) The Gauleiter's<sup>5</sup> journey to Berlin for a conference with the Führer, which I reported by private letter to Bergmann,<sup>6</sup> has been postponed but will presumably take place in the course of this week. This conversation will probably produce a decision about further action in the questions that are outstanding.

III) A further report by telegram will follow.<sup>7</sup>

ECKNER

<sup>5</sup> Albert Forster.

<sup>6</sup> In this letter to Bergmann dated Oct. 5 (7596/E543676), Eckner wrote: "I have been told in confidence that Gauleiter Forster is going to Berlin this evening for political discussions. I assume that the Führer will be taking important decisions concerning Danzig. Senator Batzer is also going to Berlin this evening. But I do not think his journey is directly connected with the Gauleiter's. With every reservation, I venture to say that the first of these conversations, that between the Führer and the Gauleiter, will presumably be concerned with the plan to bring out a ban of the opposition parties as well as with taking further severe measures against Jews in Danzig."

<sup>7</sup> Danzig telegram No. 32 of Oct. 8 (1723/399773), in which Eckner reported that he had not been able to obtain more definite information from the Senate that day but had been told that greater clarity might prevail on the morrow.

## No. 576

1933/433571-76

### *The Minister in Rumania to the Foreign Ministry*

2487—I A 4

BUCHAREST, October 7, 1936.

Received October 10.

Pol. IV 3585.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with King Carol II.

King Carol II received me yesterday in his Castle of "Foisor" near Sinaia. Referring to our last conversation,<sup>1</sup> I first informed the King that I had ascertained in Berlin that neither from official quarters nor from Party offices in the Reich had funds been supplied to Right-wing parties in Rumania;<sup>2</sup> the reports in this sense which had reached His Majesty must presumably be based on boasting by certain persons who thus wished to vaunt their relations with German Party offices for purposes of Rumanian party politics, or on rumours concerning legitimate profits made by business men which their political opponents were trying to exploit against them. The King replied that he was very grateful to me for this information, for any action of this kind, which

<sup>1</sup> Of June 23; see document No. 397.

<sup>2</sup> See also documents Nos. 492 and 498.

amounted to the support of a party in Rumania, was calculated seriously to endanger relations between Germany and Rumania. He must tell me so most clearly and frankly.

The other point, and the only point today which was disturbing our mutual relations, he said, was Hungary. As long as Germany supported Hungary's revisionism, it was very difficult for Rumania to reach closer relations with Germany.

I told the King in reply that we were not supporting Hungary's revisionist claims at all. Of course, we felt sympathy for Hungary if only because she was revisionist like ourselves. But Germany had never put forward the claim for a possible restoration to Hungary of her former territories; in this connexion we were also compelled to consider where the German minorities would get the best treatment for, as he was aware, we attached great importance to the preservation of their cultural and national characteristics. Therefore it seemed to me that our friendship with Hungary constituted no form of impediment to the cultivation of our relations with Rumania.

Upon the King remarking that nevertheless Europe was divided into revisionist and anti-revisionist countries and that we belonged to the one and Rumania to the other, I replied that it seemed to me that a different alignment was much more important today, and that was Bolshevism and the anti-Bolshevist countries.

Thereupon the King said emphatically: <sup>[6]</sup> "You know that I am no friend of Bolshevism and that it is *my wish to shape the policy of my country in terms of closer and more friendly relations with Germany*. But please tell your Government that it must not be assumed that Titulescu's removal enables me to put about the helm and steer a different course forthwith. They should proceed very cautiously in Berlin, as otherwise they might easily destroy something which I wish to do. I am compelled to pursue a Rumanian policy and not a German one. Rumania's policy is one of treaties of alliance with France, with Poland and with the Little Entente. The latter will always stand solidly together whenever the situation requires it. Should Germany succeed in establishing good relations with France and if, in addition a *rapprochement* between Czechoslovakia and Germany should also be possible, this would afford me the opportunity of coming forward more openly."<sup>7</sup> But, said the King, he was clear about one thing; he was not going to play the policy of Soviet-Russia. That he had so far been driven to adopt such a policy was because of the serious belief that a German-Hungarian threat existed.

The King, who, in telling me the above, had been led on by one thing to the next, ended up by saying that perhaps he had told me too much but that he would like to ask me to point out in Berlin that everything should be avoided which might compromise his policy which he must introduce very cautiously.



I thanked the King for his information and expressed the hope that we would succeed in achieving closer mutual relations. We then also spoke briefly of German-French and German-Czechoslovak relations, whereupon the King observed that he thought the former might become closer despite the Jew Blum and that, according to his information, the latter also gave grounds for hoping that a more propitious settlement might be forthcoming. I said in reply that the question of M. Beneš' treatment of the Sudeten Germans and the close alignment with Soviet Russia which M. Beneš was seeking were impediments. The King thought that M. Beneš had sought relations with Soviet Russia only for fear of Germany.

Turning to Rumania's domestic politics, I remarked that a *rapprochement* with Germany would also be welcome amongst a large section of the Rumanian people; I had had occasion recently repeatedly to observe this. The King said that this was indeed so; we were quite unaware of the number of friends we had acquired through the Olympic Games; people who had previously been outspoken opponents of Germany had now become enthusiastic supporters of Adolf Hitler. I remarked that a change was also noticeable amongst the broad masses of the population and asked him to appreciate that naturally we had more sympathy for and interest in the Right-wing parties, those of MM. Goga, Cuza and Vaida,<sup>3</sup> who in their speeches always spoke in friendly terms of Germany and particularly of the Third Reich, than for those who, like Maniu<sup>4</sup> and the Tsaranists [Peasant Party], campaigned against us. The King thought that these opponents of Germany accentuated their opposition more for reasons of propaganda in home politics than from any hatred for Germany.

I asked the King why he had abolished the Labour Service and had had the Labour Camps closed. After all, some of these had been run on model lines in the areas of German settlement. The King replied that admittedly the Saxons [Transylvanian Germans] had run the Service very well. The Government intended to profit by this example when having the Service set up again by their State organizations and the communes. Hitherto the Labour Service had been a party organization of the Iron Guard<sup>5</sup> and had therefore had to be dissolved. With the dissolution of the Rumanian Labour Service that of the German minorities had had to be dissolved too. There was no justification for the Iron Guard in this country—things were different here from what they were in Germany—and he intended to keep the Youth Organization here in his own hands. Upon my asking whether he was not willing

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<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 440, footnote 6, and 492, footnote 1.

<sup>4</sup> Julius Maniu, founder of the National Peasant Party.

<sup>5</sup> A Rumanian quasi-Fascist party under the leadership of Zelea Codreanu; it had been officially dissolved at the end of 1933 but had reappeared under another name.



to let the Youth Organization "Strajeri" establish relations with the Hitler Youth, he said that this was still premature and that he would like us to wait. Meanwhile, he had already repeatedly sent Youth Organization leaders of both sexes to Germany to study the organization there and, if possible, would be glad to continue to do so. Thereupon I described to the King the profound impressions which I had gained at the Party Rally in Nuremberg, to which he listened with interest.

At the end of my audience I added that I had constantly to note with regret the way in which the Jewish Press was trying to mislead public opinion amongst the Rumanian people by spreading consciously false reports about Germany. The Government, I said, did indeed dispose, in their press censorship, of a means for taking action against such deliberate misrepresentations. The King thanked me for this suggestion and promised that he would see to it that the censorship was better handled.

On my departure the King received in private audience Prince Friedrich Christian von Schaumburg-Lippe who was here for the purpose of speaking at the Harvest Thanksgiving celebrations.

On the following day the King drove to the manoeuvres.

FABRICIUS

## No. 577

387/211432-34

*Counsellor of Embassy Bismarck to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff*

LONDON, October 7, 1936.

DEAR HERR DIECKHOFF: Let me first thank you for the cipher letter of October 3,<sup>1</sup> addressed to me personally; its contents were very valuable to me as a guiding principle to which I will strictly adhere.

Herr Woermann and Dr. Kordt have meanwhile arrived here; the former is remaining until about the middle of next week, and I will try to introduce him to a few people whom it may be valuable for him to know. The rebuilding is already in full swing; we have moved into the cellar, and we are now expecting the new Ambassador<sup>2</sup> to arrive here between the 20th and the 25th of this month.

Sir Robert and Lady Vansittart invited us both to dinner yesterday evening, where we were just *à quatre*; incidentally, it was the first time in the many years I have been here that Sir Robert had invited us. But they were both extremely nice and again said that they were very satisfied with their visit to Berlin.<sup>3</sup> Lady Vansittart in particular enthused to me for a long time about the evening spent with the

<sup>1</sup> Not found.

<sup>2</sup> Ribbentrop's appointment as Ambassador in Great Britain had been announced on Aug. 11, 1936.

<sup>3</sup> See also document No. 489 with footnotes 1 and 2 thereto.

Führer, whose personality has made a quite exceptionally strong impression on her. They took us to the cinema afterwards, and it was interesting to note that when, during the newsreel, a fairly long film was shown about the fights between the Fascists and members of the Left-wing party in the East End of London, Lady Vansittart most sharply criticized the Communist agitation in these parts of London and attributed it to Russian influence. In addition, when the capture of Toledo was shown on the screen, she, like a number of others present, warmly applauded the victorious White troops.

Sir Robert himself did not say much about politics, but he expressed the opinion that the domestic situation in France had grown very considerably quieter, especially in the last fortnight, and that it could be hoped that, as a result of the currency agreement,<sup>4</sup> the Blum Cabinet had been considerably stabilized. As regards the Italian decision to devalue the lira,<sup>5</sup> he said he had been surprised at the rapidity with which Italy had decided upon devaluation. Although business circles in Italy had strongly advocated it, he had nevertheless believed that Mussolini, for reasons of prestige, would at least let a considerable time go by before finally taking this decision. Finally, mention may also be made of the disapproving way in which both the Vansittarts talked about the British Cabinet, whose members, they said, with the exception of Sir Samuel Hoare, all took their tasks too lightly and did too little work.

I have agreed with Herr Woermann, who is going back to Berlin once more before finally taking up his duties, and who will then, no doubt, arrive here together with the new Ambassador, that he will immediately take over the functions of Counsellor of Embassy, for immediate purposes at any rate, and that I will then gradually begin to strike my camp here and prepare my removal to Berlin.

With best wishes,

Yours etc.,

BISMARCK

<sup>4</sup> i.e. the Three Power Currency Declaration; on Sept. 25, 1936 the French, British and United States Governments issued statements in similar terms, *mutatis mutandis* announcing the devaluation of the French franc and their agreement to use "the appropriate available resources" to avoid, as far as possible, any resultant disturbances of the basis of international exchanges.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 572, footnote 10.

## No. 578

2381/498958

### *Memorandum by an Official of Political Division IV*

STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 9, 1936.

Pol. IV 3587.

Konrad Henlein, the leader of the Sudeten German Party, was in Berlin yesterday for a few hours. In conversation, he was visibly

relieved about the fact that it had meanwhile been possible to restore unity in the Party through the rehabilitation of Dr. Kreissl and Kaspar [sic] and their re-inclusion in the council of leaders of the Party.<sup>1</sup> He now intends to promote, in close cooperation with the competent Party authorities in the Reich, both the trades union organization and the expansion of the agricultural workers' organization of the S[udeten] G[erman] P[arty]. Herr Henlein expressed great satisfaction over the understanding which had for months been shown towards the Sudeten German question by the British public. The position of the Party *vis-à-vis* the Czechoslovak Government had been greatly strengthened by this.

Furthermore there is, according to Henlein, a possibility of obtaining funds through the Deutsche Arbeitsfront<sup>2</sup> for developing the Sudeten German trades unions, for setting up labour and training camps, for relieving the distress in the Sudeten German territory and for creating a land protection organization (safeguarding of landed property in *volksdeutsch* possession). To this end there is to be a discussion in the near future between Konrad Henlein and Dr. Ley.<sup>3</sup>

ALTENBURG

<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 364 and 372.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the German Labour Front, under the leadership of Dr. Robert Ley.

<sup>3</sup> In a memorandum dated Oct. 16 (1613/386549-50) Altenburg recorded that he had been informed by Dr. Ley's deputy, Dr. Krüger, that the discussion had taken place on the previous day, and that Dr. Ley had agreed to make available five to six hundred thousand RM.

## No. 579

1723/399774-75

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

Airgram en clair

No. 62 of October 9

WARSAW, October 9, 1936.

Received October 10—8:45 a.m.

Pol. V 4223.

With reference to your telegram No. 112 of October 6.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing positive can as yet be ascertained here about the question of Polish action with regard to the execution of the League's commission.<sup>2</sup> A conversation with the Deputy Minister, Count Szembek, who had obviously not yet received instructions, has not produced any results either.<sup>3</sup> Further procedure will probably not be decided upon until after Beck's return and his report to Rydz-Smigly.

The Polish Government's general line can be deduced with some probability from their previous attitude to the Danzig problem and the developments of the last few months. In January Poland put it on record that she had special interests in Danzig and that the Council

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 573 with footnote 6 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 573, footnote 3.

<sup>3</sup> See also Szembek: *Journal*, pp. 209-210.



might therefore count upon her especial support. In July, this same consideration, together with Poland's emphasis upon the conduct of Danzig foreign policy led to Poland's being entrusted with the task of negotiating with Germany in the name of the League;<sup>4</sup> and now Poland has finally succeeded in obtaining a comprehensive mandate in Danzig itself. Poland will undoubtedly strive to maintain, and as far as possible expand, this position, which she has systematically acquired and which seems to her indispensable as a counterweight against the constantly increasing internal dependence of Danzig on the Reich. In so doing Poland will probably be prepared to make concessions in the question (a particularly uncomfortable one for Danzig) of interference by the League in internal political affairs, and perhaps she may even agree to modifications of the Statute as well, but, on the other hand, she will be all the more intent on procuring for herself additional rights in the most diverse spheres, and this both for the Polish State and for the Polish minority. Presumably particular importance will also be attached to safeguarding and supervising Polish rights, particularly if Danzig's desire for the removal of the institution of the League Commissioner were to be accepted. No forecast can yet be made as to which final solution will be envisaged, whether that of a Polish Special Commissioner, or that of a prolongation of the present mandate, or of some other prerogative encroaching on Danzig's sovereignty.

In these circumstances it would probably be advisable for the Danzig Senate, too, to await a further clarification of the Polish intentions and not to commit itself too much in public as yet. It is not yet possible to tell whether the retention of the institution of a League Commissioner with diminished powers might not after all constitute the lesser evil—also in view of the fact that this solution might perhaps entail less of a permanent threat to German-Polish relations than would any other. It must in any case be borne in mind that the Danzig question is one of the central problems of, and today more than ever the most sensitive spot in, Polish policy, for which reason any discussions of it can very easily cause our relations with Poland to be adversely affected.

MOLTKE

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 430 and footnote 1 thereto.

## No. 580

7296/E534405-07

*The Minister in the Union of South Africa to the Foreign Ministry*

4395/1451

PRETORIA, October 9, 1936.

Received October 20.

Pol. VII 1752.

Subject: State Secretary Bodenstein<sup>1</sup> on the attitude of the Union of

<sup>1</sup> South African Secretary of State for External Affairs.



South Africa in the event of a possible war.

With reference to my reports 4395/1448 of October 8, 1936<sup>2</sup> and 4438/1450 of October 9, 1936.<sup>3</sup>

After my discussion with State Secretary Dr. Bodenstein, reported in my two previous despatches, there developed a more private conversation about the probable attitude of the Union of South Africa in the event of a European war. I emphasized from the outset that I naturally had no instructions whatever to discuss such a question and that personally, too, I considered such a discussion academic, since I did not believe in the possibility of a European war. I observed, however, that the significance in practice of the repeated assertions by the Prime Minister that a decision as to the participation of South Africa in a possible war could not be taken by the Government of the Union alone, but must be taken by the whole people through Parliament, was not quite clear to me, for the Government of the Union had, after all, through the fusion of the Hertzog and Smuts parties, a four-fifths majority in Parliament, so that in practice it was out of the question for Parliament to decide against the Government, at least if the whips were, as usual, applied to the Party's Parliamentary group. General Hertzog's statements could therefore, I supposed, only be taken to mean that the whips might possibly not be put on but rather that the Government in fact intended to leave the decision to public opinion through Parliament. In this connexion it seemed to me that it would be particularly dangerous if the Government were to leave uncontradicted the attempts at incitement by the large English-language press, where Germany was already being represented as the enemy in any future war whatever. It was, I said, even more dangerous when these attempts at incitement were furthered by remarks made by official personages, such as the alleged remarks by Administrator Conradie<sup>4</sup> and Minister Dr. van Broekhuizen,<sup>5</sup> and also by recent public speeches by various Ministers which contained utterances about an impending struggle between Fascism and Democracy. Such an expectant, indeed even encouraging, attitude on the part of the Government might lead, at the decisive moment, to a situation in which public opinion, misled and incited, would seize the reins from the Government and produce decisions in Parliament which might not correspond to those of the official Government.

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7296/E534401-04). This reported a speech by General Hertzog, South African Prime Minister, to the Congress of the United South African National Party on the attitude of South Africa in the event of a war, and Bodenstein's assurance to Wiehl that Hertzog's intention was to correct current misconceptions about South Africa's position.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> J. H. Conradie, Administrator of Cape Province.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. Herman Dirk van Broekhuizen, South African Minister at The Hague.

Dr. Bodenstein, with regard to such possibilities, first referred to the statements by Pirow<sup>6</sup> and Hertzog about the Government's overall views, and also to his own statements about the utterances of Dr. Conradie and Dr. van Broekhuisen. He also stressed that the phrases about an impending struggle between Fascism and Democracy had originally been contained in public statements by leading British Ministers. Finally he told me approximately the following, which was also purely personal and confidential:

The English-language press here was admittedly sensational in its make-up and, owing to its varied contents, it had a considerable circle of readers, but it did not speak for the majority of the white population of the country. On the contrary, more than half of this population was composed of the Boer South Africans in the smaller towns and in the country, who were not affected by this English-language press but, on the contrary, viewed it with great distrust. This Boer section of the population was, too, entirely opposed to a war with Germany. This fact would, in the event of a Parliamentary vote, make itself decisively felt, irrespective of any agitation beforehand by the English-language press. Moreover, he, Bodenstein, was personally convinced that a European war was in fact extremely improbable. For no European statesman could hope for any advantage from a war. I interjected at this point that, in the German view, there was a considerable element of danger in the Russian urge to make Bolshevism prevail outside Russia as well, and that Spain was at present the clearest proof of this. In reply to this Bodenstein observed that a German-Russian conflict was certainly not beyond the bounds of possibility, since both peoples, under their different ideologies, were incited to extreme hatred against each other. Such a war, however, would not affect the Union of South Africa in any way. I naturally pointed out that any aggressive intentions towards Russia were far from Germany's thoughts. Bodenstein went on to say that, by reason of the aforementioned attitude of the Boer part of the population, the Union of South Africa would not in his opinion participate even in a possible European war in which Germany and Britain were opposed to each other. At any rate, the Union would begin by adopting this attitude. One could not foretell what would happen, however, during the further course of such a war if it were to become clear that there was a danger of Britain's being defeated in the war. By this Bodenstein obviously meant to indicate that in that case the participation of South Africa, in order to prevent a British defeat, might after all be in the Union's interests. Finally Bodenstein stressed most emphatically that the British Government were fully aware that the Union of South Africa would not take part in a war against Germany ('the British Government knows perfectly

<sup>6</sup> Oswald Pirow, South African Minister of Railways and Ports and of Defence.

well that we are not going to war with Germany').<sup>7</sup> He stressed this so firmly that I am compelled to assume that the Government of the Union have stated this point of view plainly in London several times during the last few months (cf. my telegram about the influence exerted in London by the Government of the Union after the occupation of the Rhineland).<sup>8</sup> When Bodenstein noticed that I was greatly interested in this statement of his, he repeated it, but with the reservation "in the present situation" ('not going to war with Germany on the existing issues'),<sup>7</sup> and he added that of course no one could know what new disputes might not arise in future in the world.

WIEHL

<sup>7</sup> The words in single quotation marks are in English in the original.

<sup>8</sup> i.e., telegram No. 10 of Mar. 16 (document No. 127).

## No. 581

6180/E464373-74

*The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter-Telegram en clair

No. 62 of October 10

BRUSSELS, October 10, 1936.

Received October 11—10:25 a.m.

Pol. II 2223.

The agreement concluded between the Rexists and the National Flemings on October 8,<sup>1</sup> about which a despatch follows by today's courier,<sup>2</sup> is meeting with great interest among the Belgian public and is arousing passionate controversy. In this the Liberal and Socialist press are playing up the pro-German feelings of both parties to the agreement and the separatist tendencies of the National Flemings, this by making use of Germany's policy towards the Flemings during the War, in order to discredit the agreement. The agreement, which has been kept secret so far and about which only some general indications have been published, envisages the transformation of Belgium into a federal State on an authoritarian and corporate basis, composed of the Walloon country and Flanders each with its one language and a bilingual district of Greater Brussels. The National Flemings maintain their Greater Netherlands idea, but concede that the Belgian State should continue to exist "under the crown of the Saxe-Coburgs". The objective of common action in Flanders is described as being the struggle and defence against Communism.

<sup>1</sup> This agreement was concluded between Léon Degrelle, leader of the Rexist movement, and Stof De Clerq, leader of the Vlaamsch Nationaal Verbond.

<sup>2</sup> This was report A 401 of Oct. 10 (3325/E008160-69), in which Richthofen gave an account of the development of the Rexist movement and of its relations with the Flemish Nationalists, and analysed the agreement reached between them as far as its provisions were known through the press.



The agreement, therefore, offers no grounds for attack on account of any pro-German line and still less on account of Flemish separatism. On the contrary, if the agreement were successful, separatism would be completely eliminated first of all. A pro-German line and aversion to France, together with a rejection of Belgian allegiance to France, are, however, clearly expressed in the statements of both parties which accompany the agreement.

The agreement which to begin with has, at best, the support of only 37<sup>3</sup> out of 202 members of the Belgian Chamber, and, according to the latest news, of the Dinaso Fascist group under van Severen<sup>4</sup> which has hitherto remained outside the political struggle, might achieve revolutionary importance which would change the face of Belgium, if all of the groups standing behind the parties to the agreement were to give their support and if the previous advance of the Rexists and the National Flemings continued. Opposition to the agreement will come from chauvinistic, Francophil circles, and probably also from the extreme wing of the National Flemings, who have so far rejected any cooperation with the Walloons and any "Belgian solution" of the Flemish problem.

Our attitude towards the agreement, particularly in the German press, will have to be one of friendly reserve, though we need not conceal our interest in the agreement which, should it prove successful, would doubtless be favourable to us, but in view of the uncertainty as to how matters will develop we should avoid exaggerated enthusiasm. Attention will need to be paid to this and likewise to German pro-Flemings and the pro-Flemish press, in case they should show a tendency to advocate an extremist Flemish point of view.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>3</sup> i.e., the 21 Rexists and 16 Flemish Nationalist deputies elected on May 24, 1936.

<sup>4</sup> Joris van Severen, lawyer and political theorist, who in 1931 founded the *Verbond der Dietsche Nationaalsolidaristen*, known also as the *Verdinaso* or *Dinaso*; its programme advocated the reunion of the former Burgundian lands into a single State under an authoritarian régime.

## No. 582

3944/E054094-95

*Counsellor of Legation Bräuer to Counsellor Rintelen*

BRUSSELS, October 10, 1936.

DEAR RINTELEN: With the approval of the Minister I send you a strictly secret memorandum for the information of the [Foreign] Ministry about the visit<sup>1</sup> of a Belgian personage to Berlin on September 26 and 27.

<sup>1</sup> The original of the letter here printed is in the form of a handwritten draft. At this point the words: "dealt with in my letter to Herr v. Richthofen of Sept. 6 [document No. 527] (which was circulated in the [Foreign] Ministry at the time)," have been deleted.



As the memorandum requires special handling it is being sent to you in this way with the request to you to transmit the information in an appropriate manner.

Closing salutation<sup>2</sup>

BRÄUER

1425/362798-99

[Enclosure]

BRUSSELS, October 10, 1936.

#### MEMORANDUM

(1) Following upon the visit to Berlin on September 26 and 27, the visitor, through the medium of his host, had 250,000 RM placed at his disposal. It has been left to the visitor to use the sum in any way appearing to him useful and fitting. There is no question of a direct transfer. Presumably the sum will be used to purchase newsprint in Germany, in which case care will have to be taken to see that no foreign exchange is employed, because this would give rise to a claim that Germany import Belgian goods in consequence of this export of paper. In order to settle this matter, M. Gustave Wyns<sup>3</sup> will visit Berlin some time in mid-October.

(2) Although, as a result of enquiries made by the Foreign Ministry at our suggestion,<sup>4</sup> it had appeared as though the visit to Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels, which had been proposed for a time between October 1 and 3 or after October 15<sup>5</sup>, was being replaced by the visit of September 26 and 27, there took place in Cologne on October 9 a meeting with Reich Minister Goebbels at the direct suggestion of the Gauleitung of Cologne. The outcome of this meeting is not as yet known.

(3) Before the meeting in Cologne, the attached observations on the matter of the Rexists and Eupen-Malmédy were brought to our notice from the ceded territories. As it cannot be denied that these observations are to some extent justified, they were forwarded, in advance of the meeting, to the persons representing the German side at the Cologne meeting, as an indication of opinion in the ceded territories.

3944/E054092-93

[Sub-Enclosure]

#### THE REXISTS AND EUPEN-MALMÉDY

In the present circumstances, the Rexist movement appears to be the only real danger to the Faithful to the Fatherland movement

<sup>2</sup> Thus in the original.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 507.

<sup>4</sup> No record of such enquiries has been found.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 543 and footnote 3 thereto.

[*heimattnreue Bewegung*]. The Rexist propaganda is being conducted very skilfully. It is given a strongly National Socialist complexion, which, of course, does not fail of its effect on the German-minded elements. Many regard a union with the Rexists, i.e., with a Belgian movement, as less dangerous than membership of the Faithful to the Fatherland Front [*heimattnreue Front*] which ranks as hostile to the State. The Rexists, moreover, are making much play with their Catholicism, which also is useful to them with a section of the population.

The references constantly made by the Rexist propagandists to the unmistakably benevolent attitude of the German press towards the Rexist movement must be regarded as very dangerous. The Rexists at their meetings charge us with hindering, against the will of the Führer, the understanding with Germany for which Degrelle is striving! Obviously the intrigues of the Rexist movement have created a certain amount of confusion amongst a section of our adherents. The Rexists are also spreading reports that Degrelle, after coming to power, will dissolve the organizations faithful to the Fatherland.

In our opinion the Rexists should be required, if need be, to give binding promises not only in the matter of Eupen-Malmédy itself, but also with regard to the continued existence of all organizations faithful to the Fatherland. (The Faithful to the Fatherland Front [*heimattnreue Front*], the Homeland League [*Heimatbund*], economic associations, etc.) The best thing would be to demand that the Rexists should conduct no propaganda whatsoever amongst the new-Belgian Germans.

It would be desirable if the German press, without, of course, in any way adopting a hostile attitude towards the Rexists, were to content itself with purely objective and factual reporting.

## No. 583

7253/E532204

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 192 of October 12

ROME, October 12, 1936—1:25 p.m.

Received October 12—4:30 p.m.

W III SE 4311.

With reference to my telegram No. 189 of October 5.<sup>1</sup>

Soon after his return from Budapest<sup>2</sup> today, I resumed my conversation with Ciano in the sense of your despatch W [III] SE 2804 of August 31<sup>3</sup> and handed him a *Pro Memoria*<sup>4</sup> covering the main aspects.

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 572.

<sup>2</sup> Count Ciano was in Budapest on Oct. 10, 1936, to attend the funeral of the former Hungarian Minister President, General Gömbös, whose death had occurred on Oct. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 523.

<sup>4</sup> Hassell forwarded the German text of this *Pro Memoria* to Berlin in despatch No. 4734 of Oct. 15 (7253/E532230-36).

Ciano suggested that he should now examine the *Pro Memoria* together with the appropriate departments, so that his visit to Berlin might be made to include this item on the programme, when either there could be an exchange of letters on the subject then and there, or agreement in principle could be recorded in the internal protocol in order to secure cooperation along certain basic principles.

In reply to a remark of mine in the sense of your telegram [No.] 242 of October 10,<sup>5</sup> he declared that the report of negotiations with Czechoslovakia about her accession to the Rome Protocol was pure invention, and that nothing of the kind was envisaged for the Vienna Conference.

HASSELL

<sup>5</sup> This telegram (3250/E000198) requested comment on a report by the Rome correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* of rumours that Czechoslovak accession to the Rome Protocols, alleged to have been for some time the subject of negotiations with Italy, was to be effected at the forthcoming conference in Vienna of the signatories to the Rome Protocols of Mar. 17, 1934, and Mar. 23, 1936 (see document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3).

### No. 584

1723/399783

#### *The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 33 of October 12

DANZIG, October 12, 1936—3:35 p.m.

Received October 12—4:30 p.m.

Pol. V 4279.

With reference to my [telegram No.] 32 of [October] 8.<sup>1</sup>

I learn that the Gauleiter has gone to Munich. A decisive discussion with the Führer will probably take place there today or tomorrow.

Searches of the houses of supporters of the Social Democratic Party are continuing here. All the indications are that the Social Democratic Party will shortly be banned.

ECKNER

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 575, footnote 7.

### No. 585

1872/423849-50

#### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 248 of October 12

BERLIN, October 12, 1936—9:15 p.m.

zu Pol. I 2538<sup>1</sup> IV.

I consider it necessary to have our reply to the British Memorandum of September 17<sup>2</sup> on the Five Power Conference communicated in

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 596.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 546, enclosure.

London in the middle of this week. The French Government have already communicated their reply, or intend to do so in the next few days. I do not want to find myself restricted by this in my own reply. Moreover, in view of the far-reaching agreement in substance between the German and the Italian replies, it seems to me best to make our views known to the British Government before Count Ciano's visit to Berlin.

You should inform the Italian Foreign Minister of the above, adding that we have given the utmost consideration to the Italian wishes.

NEURATH

## No. 586

1528/373839-40

### *Circular of the Foreign Ministry<sup>1</sup>*

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 12, 1936.

Drafting Officer: Counsellor Busse

[zu] Pol. IV 3489.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to our despatch Pol. IV 2882 of September 12, 1936.<sup>3</sup>

Our Ambassador in Rome has had an opportunity of discussing the contents of the despatch under reference with the Italian Head of Government. Mussolini told Herr von Hassell on this occasion that Italy's relations with Yugoslavia had in fact improved somewhat and that in any case where economic policy was concerned intentions on the Italian side were of the best. Nevertheless, Italy was, in this question, to some extent bound to Hungary who was firmly convinced that it was not possible to detach Yugoslavia from the Little Entente. He, Mussolini, could not shape Italian policy towards the States of the Little Entente without considering Hungary, but he agreed with us that even though it might not be possible to detach Yugoslavia altogether, yet, in view of Yugoslavia's anti-Soviet attitude and Minister President Stojadinović's estimable personality, it might perhaps be possible somewhat to loosen her ties with the Little Entente.

By order:

ERDMANNSDORFF

<sup>1</sup> Addressees were the Missions in Paris, London, Belgrade, Prague, Bucharest, Budapest, Vienna and Tirana.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 572.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 534.

## No. 587

2370/495223-25

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 12, 1936.

RM 730.

Pol. IV 3645.

The Czechoslovak Minister called upon me this morning and again



brought up the protest made in the *Note Verbale* of September 23<sup>1</sup> about remarks made at Nuremberg by Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels and Reichsleiter Rosenberg. M. Mastný said that he had been instructed by State President Beneš to give a solemn assurance that Czechoslovakia was neither a Communist State nor did she permit her policy to be directed by another State. Similarly, the allegations made on our part that Soviet-Russian officers had constructed airfields in Czechoslovakia and were employed in considerable numbers in the Czechoslovak Army were false.

I told M. Mastný in reply that I regretted having to inform him that our information regarding the activity of the Russian army in Czechoslovakia did not accord with the assurance he was giving me. I did not wish to doubt either his or M. Beneš' good faith, yet I could imagine that relations between the Czechoslovak and Russian armies were closer than either he or M. Beneš would admit. In any case I must reject the protest made in the *Note Verbale* of September 23.

M. Mastný then assured me that Czechoslovakia's attitude towards Germany had recently been very much more cordial, as was already apparent if only from State President Beneš' statements<sup>2</sup>. Naturally, such a change in Czechoslovak policy took a certain amount of time to prepare in order to make it plausible to the people. I told M. Mastný that this change in Czechoslovakia's policy of which he spoke had come about very belatedly indeed, and sounded somewhat improbable coming from the lips of M. Beneš. If it were sincere, then we would welcome it, if only for the sake of the Czechoslovak nationals who were of German stock.

After drawing attention to his own services in the settlement of the various recent incidents and once more trying to prove that our information regarding the construction of Soviet Russian airfields in Czechoslovakia or Russian assistance towards this end was erroneous, M. Mastný took his leave, without insisting upon a written reply to the *Note Verbale*.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 550, enclosure. Mastný had enquired about the German reaction to the protest in a conversation with Dieckhoff on Oct. 9 which the latter recorded in a memorandum of even date (1941/434772). When informed that the protest had already been rejected, Mastný stated that he had instructions to bring the matter to the attention of the Foreign Minister again.

<sup>2</sup> This would appear to be a reference to speeches delivered at Liberec, Jablonec, and Železný Brod on Aug. 19 which were the subject of despatch A III 2 of Aug. 20 (2381/-498944-52); see also document No. 614 and *Survey of International Affairs, 1936*, p. 496.

## No. 588

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 12, 1936.

RM 732.

The Italian Ambassador came to see me this afternoon in order to discuss [Foreign] Minister Ciano's impending visit with me. He confirmed the agreement already reached<sup>1</sup> with regard to the treatment of the visit and the publication of a communiqué in general terms, and also that the individual points discussed should be laid down in a protocol which was not to be published. With regard to this latter we agreed that it should cover the following points:

- (1) A common line in dealing with the so-called Locarno Conference.
- (2) Recognition of the extension of the Roman Empire to [include] Abyssinia.
- (3) Agreement on the attitude to be adopted towards the League of Nations, which should be based on the statement made to Mussolini on the Führer's instructions regarding Germany's attitude towards the League of Nations in the event of Italy's withdrawal.
- (4) Italian support of German wishes with regard to colonies and raw materials.
- (5) Agreement on economic cooperation in the Danubian region.

With regard to the ceremonial side of the visit, I told Signor Attolico that we had instructed Herr von Hassell to ascertain Ciano's wishes. I myself intended to give a dinner in Signor Ciano's honour on the evening of the 21st at the Reich President's palace.

The Italian Ambassador proposes to give a big reception at the Embassy on the evening of the 22nd.

No information is as yet available with regard to the Führer's intentions, but I have been in touch with State Secretary Meissner on the subject.

FREIHERR V. NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 572, to which Weizsäcker replied in telegram No. 243 of Oct. 11 (348/201788): "With reference to Ciano's visit: We are agreed with your proposal to leave Rome by air on Tuesday, Oct. 20, and also with the proposed five points for the agenda for the conversations here (Five Power pact, relations of the two countries to the League of Nations, possible recognition of the Burgos Government, recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia and of our economic interests there, coordination of German-Italian economic policy in the Danube Basin). The setting down of the result in an internal protocol [confined to ourselves] and the publication of a communiqué in more general terms is also in conformity with our wishes.

"You should ascertain which leading members of the Reich Government and the Party Ciano wishes to visit in person. The Reich Foreign Minister's dinner is planned for Oct. 21.

"You should also find out whether and which institutions of the Third Reich Ciano wishes to inspect (H[itler] Y[outh], SS. Labour Service, Reich motorway, Reich athletics field?) and whether he has any special wishes regarding the sights of Berlin (Pergamon Museum, Potsdam?). Overloading of the programme, especially for the first few days, ought to be avoided, in the interests of completing the material conversations.

"We should be glad to be informed at an early stage as to the composition of Ciano's entourage."

## No. 589

7417/E539344

*The Minister in Hungary to the Foreign Ministry*

CONFIDENTIAL

A 257 P 46

BUDAPEST, October 12, 1936.

[Received, October 22]<sup>1</sup>

W III SE 4575.

Subject: Increased imports of Hungarian foodstuffs into Germany in return for correspondingly increased exports to Hungary of products of the German armament industry.

As he informed me before his departure, Minister President Colonel General Göring took the opportunity, during his stay in Budapest in connexion with the funeral of Minister President Gömbös, of discussing with the Deputy Minister President and Minister of Agriculture de Darányi<sup>2</sup> the question of increased imports [into Hungary] from Germany of products of the armament industry<sup>3</sup> in return for increased Hungarian exports of agricultural produce with a view to improving the food situation in Germany. He had suggested that His Excellency de Darányi should in the first instance let him have a comprehensive list of all those agricultural products which Hungary was in a position to supply in quantities in excess of those so far agreed.

V. MACKENSEN

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<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was sent under cover of document No. 612 from which the date of receipt is taken.

<sup>2</sup> Dr Kálman Darányi, the Hungarian Minister of Agriculture, had been appointed Deputy Minister President during Gen. Gömbös' illness.

<sup>3</sup> For previous negotiations on deliveries of armaments, see vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 307, 310, 316 and 391.

## No. 590

392/212182-35

*Ambassador Schulenburg to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff*

Moscow, October 12, 1936.

DEAR HERR DIECKHOFF: You will perhaps be interested to learn that on my return to the Soviet Union I was most amiably received everywhere. This was already the case at the frontier near Leningrad, and it continued to be so in Leningrad itself and in Moscow; wherever I have come into contact with Soviet authorities, they have behaved as

though nothing whatever had happened and have been almost more amiable than usual. When I called on M. Krestinski,<sup>1</sup> who is at present Head of the Foreign Commissariat, to announce my return, he too was extremely friendly and did not refer to the events at Nuremberg<sup>2</sup> at all.

The way in which the new Spanish Ambassador<sup>3</sup> has been received by the Soviet authorities has attracted much notice here. M. Krestinski, who, as already mentioned, is at present Head of the Foreign Commissariat, the Chief of Protocol and a large number of high-ranking Soviet functionaries were waiting to receive him at the station, and a vast crowd had assembled outside the station. The Italian Ambassador,<sup>4</sup> who arrived the same day, was "in accordance with protocol" received only by the representative of the Chief of Protocol, and indeed also by a Director of Department from the Foreign Ministry. I have the growing impression here that the Soviet Russians—partly to annoy the Western Powers, but also with a view to rescuing, out of the Spanish affair, if not Communism's good name, then at least the sympathies of the various Communist parties abroad—have decided to support Red Spain fairly openly.<sup>5</sup> We also think that Litvinov himself pressed for a Spanish Ambassador to be sent, in order to normalize the position of M. Rosenberg<sup>6</sup> in Madrid and to avoid giving the impression that the Soviet Ambassador in Spain had been sent there specifically for the purpose of directing the struggle against the Nationalists. The new Spanish Ambassador has already presented his credentials three days since, but has allowed nothing further to be heard of himself.

When I arrived, rumours were circulating here that the Russians intended to do us down by making the delivery of those goods and raw materials which are important to us (wood, furs, manganese, hemp) impossible. These rumours are not, it seems, confirmed. True, Herr Hollender,<sup>7</sup> the well-known Leipzig fur dealer, who has just been staying here, has been unable to obtain any goods, but this seems to have been because no agreement could be reached about the method of payment. Again, Herr von Swieykowski<sup>8</sup> has, without more ado, concluded the transaction for the export of tubing which he was sent here to bring about. The Russians were, it seems, particularly amiable.

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<sup>1</sup> Nikolai Nikolaievich Krestinsky, First Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs; former Soviet Ambassador in Germany.

<sup>2</sup> Evidently a reference to the Party Rally held at Nuremberg, in September, at which Hitler, Goebbels and Hess, in particular, had delivered speeches markedly attacking Bolshevism.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Marcelino Pascua.

<sup>4</sup> Augusto Rosso, who had replaced Pietro Arone, Baron di Valentino, as Italian Ambassador in the Soviet Union, took up his post on Oct. 9, 1936.

<sup>5</sup> See also vol. III of Series D., document No. 97.

<sup>6</sup> Marcel Rosenberg, Soviet Ambassador in Spain.

<sup>7</sup> Paul G. Hollender, see also document No. 591.

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 591.



Apparently he is also succeeding in making purchases of manganese ore, which were likewise being impeded by payment difficulties. M. Kandelaki, the Soviet Trade Delegate in Berlin, has come back here with the news that an agreement has been concluded in Berlin by which Russian goods can again be purchased in exchange for German Marks. In this connexion, the enclosed copy of a letter with annex from Herr Herbert Göring to Herr von Swieykowski of October 3<sup>9</sup> may well be of interest. I am sending it to you because it is possible that it has not yet reached the Foreign Ministry. M. Kandelaki has said here that meanwhile the Germans have definitely approved not only the sale of [aircraft] catapults to the Soviet Union but also the sale of armour-plating.

Herr Hollender has gone to Berlin in order to find out there what has actually been agreed about payment for hides and skins in Marks. He wants to call on you as well. We, the Embassy, are not yet acquainted with the alleged new Mark agreement either.<sup>10</sup>

With cordial greetings, and

Heil Hitler!

I am, my dear Herr Dieckhoff,

Yours etc.,

SCHULENBURG

<sup>9</sup> Not reprinted (392/212136-37); this letter and its enclosure are identical with Enclosures 1 and 2 to document No. 591.

<sup>10</sup> Dieckhoff replied in a letter to Schulenburg, dated Oct. 20 (392/212138), as follows: "Many thanks for your kind, very interesting letter of Oct. 12. Here too there has been no change whatever in the attitude of the Soviet Ambassador. M. Suritz, who called here recently, spoke not a word about the recent difficulties between our two countries, only asking about our attitude to various problems, like Western Pact questions etc. Unfortunately I was not able to see Herr Hollender when he called here, as I was heavily engaged that day and have had to undergo medical treatment during the past week, but if Herr Hollender calls again I will gladly see him."

## No. 591

3781/E041297-300

*Counsellor of Embassy Tippelskirch to Senior Counsellor Schliep*

Moscow, October 12, 1936.

DEAR SCHLIEP: A few days ago Herr von Swieykowski, whom you also know, arrived here to negotiate for Otto Wolff<sup>1</sup> about the sale of tubing to the Russians. Herr von Swieykowski's credentials were the letter and annex of which copies are enclosed and which the Ambassador has also sent to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff,<sup>2</sup> since he is particularly interested in the matter.

In addition to his actual commission, which will obviously be satisfactorily concluded, Herr von Swieykowski has also used his knowledge

<sup>1</sup> German industrialist, more particularly associated with coal and iron in the Ruhr, founder of the firm of Otto Wolff & Co., on the board of the Steel Trust (Vereinigte Stahlwerke), and numerous banks and industrial concerns.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 590.

of the situation in Germany to look into the possibility of deliveries of Russian manganese ores to Germany. At first he met with no success, as the Russians declared that they would only be willing to supply manganese ores to Germany in return for foreign exchange. But apparently the ground is being prepared for a change in the Russian attitude on this point, for M. Kandelaki, who, as you know, is at present in Moscow, and with whom Swieykowski discussed the matter on October 10, spoke as follows: According to information just received, a German-Russian Economic Agreement, which was being negotiated by the Generalreferent Herbert Göring and the Deputy Trade Delegate Friedrichson, was about to be satisfactorily concluded. An agreement about supplying [aircraft] catapults to Russia had also been concluded; and the delivery of armour-plating was as good as arranged. It was therefore quite possible that manganese ores might be delivered to Germany in return for *Marks*. The further supply of hides and skins for 1936 might also be included in the agreement. I immediately handed on this last piece of information to Herr Hollender,<sup>3</sup> who was intending to return to Berlin on the evening of October 10 after completely fruitless negotiations. Hollender thereupon made one more effort with the Russian authorities, but could achieve nothing concrete. He then, on the morning of the 11th, flew back to Berlin, where he intends to get in touch with Generalreferent Herbert Göring and also to call on Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff. If need be, he will then return to Moscow to resume negotiations with the Russians.

I have informed you of the above in such detail in order that you may see how important it is for the Embassy to receive instructions as promptly as possible about everything that happens in the sphere of German-Russian trade. I would therefore request you to submit this letter, of which I enclose a further copy together with its enclosure, to Herr Benzler.

With best wishes and

Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

V. TIPPELSKIRCH

P.S.—Please also show this letter to Herr Schnurre and Herr Hilger<sup>4</sup> if the two gentlemen are already in Berlin.

[Enclosure 1]

REICH AND PRUSSIAN MINISTRY OF ECONOMICS

BERLIN, October 3, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON SWIEYKOWSKI: On behalf of Minister President Colonel General Hermann Göring I am instructed to inform you that,

<sup>3</sup> Paul G. Hollender, a Leipzig fur dealer; see also document No. 590

<sup>4</sup> Gustav Hilger, Secretary of Legation at the German Embassy in Moscow.

having received my report about the aims and object of your intended journey to Moscow, the Minister President has decided that you should set out without delay and seek to conclude the manganese ore and tubing transaction in Moscow as satisfactorily as possible. I am expressly charged to assure you of the approval and special protection of the Minister President in this question.

Heil Hitler!

HERBERT L. W. GÖRING

[Enclosure 2]

Herbert L. W. Göring.

BERLIN, October 3, 1936.

*Note for Herr von Swieykowski*

The Minister President wishes to do business with the Russians at all costs. He is glad that Herr von Swieykowski is being sent to Moscow and requests him to set out as soon as possible. Next week, when he is in Berlin, Göring will receive MM. Kandelaki and Friedrichson and will meet their wishes as far as possible with regard to supplies and will *probably* also supply armour-plating. Göring is waiting to speak to Herr Otto Wolff. As soon as he arrives in Berlin, Herr Wolff is to get in touch with State Secretary Neumann<sup>5</sup>.

G[ÖRING]

<sup>5</sup> Of the Prussian Ministry of State

No. 592

7268/E533536-39

*Ministerialdirektor Sarnow to Ministerialdirektor Ritter*

DRESDEN, October 12, 1936.

Received October 13.

DEAR HERR RITTER: I venture to send you the enclosed memorandum concerning my first conversation in private with Pilja.<sup>1</sup> I would, however, request you not to hand this memorandum on to the Departments but only to make use of it confidentially within the Foreign Ministry. I am giving a copy to State Secretary Posse.<sup>2</sup>

With best regards and Heil Hitler!

SARNOW

[Enclosure]

TOP SECRET

DRESDEN, October 12, 1936.

Today I spent an hour alone with Pilja for the first time. I took the

<sup>1</sup> Milivoj Pilja, Chairman of the Yugoslav Committee, was in Germany for the third session of the Yugoslav and German Government Trade Committees; this session ended on Oct. 20 with the signature of a confidential protocol (7275/E5333806-20).

<sup>2</sup> Of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics.



welcome opportunity afforded by a very unfriendly article in the *Politika* dated October 9 (a copy of which is attached)<sup>3</sup> which Herr Neuhausen had sent me, to discuss with Pilja German-Yugoslav trade relations and the effect on the general commercial situation of the devaluation of various currencies. From the start Pilja was very forthcoming and spoke—it seemed to me—quite openly and from inner conviction. He was strongly critical of scribblings such as the attached article, attributing them firstly to the uncouthness of the journalists and secondly to the campaign against German-Yugoslav trade relations which was being conducted in the European press. He spoke quite definitely in favour of the maintenance and development of German-Yugoslav trade relations and let it be seen that he was not always as fully in agreement with the views of the National Bank as his official statements in the course of the negotiations would seem to imply.

Of the constant efforts to intensify economic relations between the Little Entente countries Pilja said that the Little Entente was a political alliance the purpose of which was defence against revisionist designs on the Balkans. It was only too natural that efforts should constantly be made to expand trade relations too between such political friends, as far as this was at all possible. Germany could view this without any concern at all. Czechoslovakia would never be in a position to absorb anything like the export surpluses of Yugoslavia and Rumania and she was just as little able to supply the industrial requirements of these two countries. Attempts at making an economic bloc of the Little Entente would doubtless continue indefinitely but they were doomed to utter futility by existing circumstances.

As for devaluation, Lazarevič had already told me in conversation over luncheon that Yugoslavia was not thinking of devaluation herself and hoped that she would be able to hold out. Pilja spoke at greater length in exactly the same sense. This matter was apparently of great interest to him for he became very vehement. The views which he gave as his own and as those of his Government corresponded exactly with the German attitude as set forth by President Schacht.<sup>4</sup> Devaluation could only have any point if it took place in the course of a general international action, which at the same time assured the preconditions for the stability of the currencies which had been restored to their proper level by devaluation. In the absence of such preconditions, however, devaluation was stupid and immoral. The Yugoslav Government would therefore not devalue unless circumstances forced them to do so. In this connexion Germany's attitude too would of course play an important part. When I asked whether he thought that Yugoslavia would be able to hold out even after Italy and Czecho-

<sup>3</sup> Not printed (7268/E53340-42); this contained a German translation of extracts from *Politika* of Oct. 9 and Sept. 14, 1936.

<sup>4</sup> In an address to the Central Committee of the Reichsbank on Sept. 30, 1936.



slovakia had devalued their currencies,<sup>5</sup> he replied that he hoped that he would be able to prevail upon these two countries to agree that, if their prices were not to rise, they would concede higher quotas and preferences.

Finally, I feel that in this connexion I should not fail to mention one other statement made by Pilja. He spoke approximately as follows: There was no doubt in his mind that in certain countries devaluation was also being made use of in order to isolate Germany economically. This he considered to be absolutely absurd. In his opinion this could very easily lead, not to isolation, but to those countries which were not devaluing becoming grouped round Germany. He listed these countries as: Yugoslavia, Poland, Austria and Hungary.

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<sup>5</sup> See document No. 572, footnote 10. The Czechoslovak parliament had, on Oct. 8, passed a law authorizing a limited devaluation of the crown.

## No. 593

348/201792-94

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 195 of October 12

ROME, October 13, 1936—00:40 a.m.

Received October 13—3:15 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 243 of October 11.<sup>1</sup>

I had two conversations with Ciano today about the Berlin visit. The date of arrival is fixed for October 20, probably by air, but if the weather is very bad, by train in the evening.

I drew attention to the interesting fact that the visit was being fairly generally construed in the world press as promoting peace, presumably as a result of a *mot d'ordre* in the important countries; the British Ambassador<sup>2</sup> told me that he was very happy about the visit and was optimistic about future developments. Ciano stated that the visit had likewise been favourably received in other countries.

Concerning the five points set out in telegram No. 243, he remarked that naturally [the point about] a common attitude towards Communism should also be included here, also that Italy (as I have already reported)<sup>3</sup> would be very ready to make a declaration of sympathy for German colonial aspirations. I drew Ciano's particular attention to the addition to [the point about] the recognition of Abyssinia concerning recognition of our economic interests; this he accepted without more ado. Apart from this, Ciano is thinking in terms of having

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 588, footnote 1

<sup>2</sup> Sir Eric Drummond.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 568.

recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia put in a special communiqué, following upon his audience with the Führer, whilst the general communiqué would naturally only be for publication at the end of the visit. In view of the short space of time available before the visit, Ciano strongly pressed for careful preparation from the political angle, and said it would be better to draft both the internal protocol and the communiqué already now. He would instruct his Ministry to draw up drafts for both of these, but asked to be informed of Germany's wishes regarding the contents of the communiqué; on this I should be grateful for telegraphic instructions, if possible by Wednesday<sup>4</sup> morning. Ciano gave an approximate outline of the contents of the communiqué, as he envisaged them, to the effect that, an exchange of views having taken place, agreement had been established on political views and "parallelism of action".<sup>5</sup> With regard to the Five-Power Pact he once more assured himself of our agreement only to reply<sup>6</sup> after the Berlin visit. At the same time he raised the question of whether we wanted to reply at all; he said it was in fact his impression that the Führer was not fond of questionnaires and this was, after all, a kind of questionnaire.

I have not yet discussed with Ciano the question of whether readiness in principle to conclude a cultural treaty (my despatch No. 4612)<sup>7</sup> should also be jointly discussed during the Berlin visit.

Concerning particulars of the programme, Ciano would be grateful for early information as to where and when he is to see the Führer. He asks that the question of visits to leading members of the Government and of the Party be settled with Attolico at your end. In any case, he would like to call on General Göring, and, as [himself] a former Minister of Propaganda, on Reich Minister Goebbels. The choice of institutions and sights to be visited he also leaves to your decision in cooperation with Attolico. He quite agrees that it is essential not to overload the programme.

As those accompanying him, Ciano has provisionally named the two Political Directors, Buti and Viteti, the Head of the Foreign Press Department in the Propaganda Ministry, Minister Grazzi, his personal secretary, Anfuso, and certain Secretaries of Legation.

HASSELL

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Oct. 14.

<sup>5</sup> The words here printed in quotation marks are in Italian in the original.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., to the British Memorandum of Sept. 17, for which see document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>7</sup> Of Oct. 9 (7440/E540196).

## No. 594

3612/E026974

*The Consulate General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

URGENT

No. 34 of October 13.

DANZIG, October 13, 1936—8:57 p.m.

Received October 13—9:45 p.m.

Pol. V 4316

As I hear, it has been decided at Berchtesgaden<sup>1</sup> that the Social Democrat Party is to be banned.

An announcement may be expected at midday on October 14 after the Summary Court proceedings have been wound up here in the morning.<sup>2</sup>

ECKNER

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 584.

<sup>2</sup> In despatch IG 1290 of Oct. 14 (7590/E543450-53) Consul General Radowitz reported that the Police President had that day dissolved the Social Democrat Party and all its sub-organizations, and enclosed a copy of the Police President's communication to the Chairman of the Danzig Social Democrat Party.

## No. 595

348/201795-96

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

No. 251

BERLIN, October 13, 1936.

Drafting officer:

zu Pol. IV 3635.

Senior Counsellor Lorenz

With reference to your telegram No. 195 of October 12.<sup>1</sup>

(1) We agree to including as further points in the internal protocol the common attitude towards Communism and Italian support of German desires with regard to colonies and raw material supplies.

(2) In the light of previous experience we are especially interested in the recognition of our economic interests in Abyssinia not remaining confined to written confirmation of the general statement which Ciano has already made orally. On the contrary, we attach importance to receiving definite promises on the main points before we announce the recognition of Abyssinia. You will shortly be receiving more detailed instructions by telegram on this matter.

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<sup>1</sup> Document No. 593.

(3) In the communiqué we were thinking of stating in quite general terms that in the course of the conversations all questions in the political and economic spheres which are of interest to both countries have been discussed. On this occasion there was established a gratifying conformity of views and endeavours on all the topics discussed. The result of the visit had thus been a valuable contribution, both in the political and economic spheres, towards facilitating the solution of current international problems by means of peaceful cooperation between the peoples.

Further instructions concerning the draft for the internal protocol are reserved.

NEURATH

### No. 596

1872/423840-48

#### *The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Great Britain*

BERLIN, October 13, 1936.

By courier on Oct. 13.

Pol. I 2538 Ang. I.

I am sending you herewith two copies of a Memorandum which represents our answer to the British Memorandum of September 17 on the Five Power Conference.<sup>1</sup> You should communicate the German Memorandum in the Foreign Office tomorrow, Wednesday, afternoon.

As the British Government have not acquainted us with the French reply,<sup>2</sup> which has now been in their possession for some time, it appears that they only intend to circulate the several replies when they have received all the replies. In any case, we are assuming that they will likewise make known our reply to the other participating Governments only if and when we are informed of their replies too. The French Government have, for their part, not yet communicated their reply to us.

For your personal information I would add that on Wednesday afternoon<sup>3</sup> I shall hand a copy of the Memorandum in strict confidence to the Italian Ambassador<sup>4</sup> here.

You should refrain from any explanation of the substance of our Memorandum when communicating it. However, in case questions should be put to you by the British side either then or later, I invite your attention to the following points explanatory of the Memorandum:

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 607, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> i.e., Oct. 14.

<sup>4</sup> B. Attolico. In a memorandum, Pol. I 2538 VI of Oct. 14 (5949/E437730-31), Kamphoevener recorded that he had that day given a copy of the enclosure here printed to the Italian Ambassador personally. Under Ang. 2 of Oct. 13 (5949/E437727) Neurath sent a copy of the document here printed and two copies of the enclosure to the Embassy in Rome.



*Re Paragraph 1*—Our attitude secures us full freedom of decision in face of any proclivities towards expanding the programme for the Five Power Conference.

*Re Paragraph 2*—The Italian Government, in accordance with the confidential consultation we have had with them, will declare against an extension of the old Rhine Pact system by the introduction of a guarantee obligation upon Germany and France in favour of Britain such as the British Government now desire. In order to take this Italian point of view into account, we have stressed that we consider the essential contents of the new pact to be a non-aggression obligation, corresponding to the old Rhine Pact, between Germany on the one side and Belgium and France on the other, together with the guaranteeing of this obligation by Britain and Italy, and that we consider any enlargement of this system possible only on condition that the equilibrium of the treaty system is not disturbed thereby. It is clear that the equilibrium of the old Rhine Pact would be seriously impaired if the agreement were to include special obligations upon the guaranteed Powers in favour of one particular guarantor. Our attitude in Paragraph 2 therefore prepares the way for the opposition to be expected from Italy.

*Re Paragraph 3*—We reject the idea of France's alliance obligations *vis-à-vis* the Soviet Union, Poland and Czechoslovakia being taken into account in the new pact in the form employed in the old Rhine Pact. Whether it will be possible to find any form, acceptable to Germany, for such an arrangement, is another matter. It is for the French, in view of our rejection of the old methods, to come forward with possible new proposals.

*Re Paragraph 4*—We declare ourselves opposed to the new pact's being linked with the League of Nations. On the other hand, we have no interest in the coming into play of the British and Italian guarantee obligation in the event of a German-French conflict being left, without more ado, to the free and independent judgement of each individual guarantor. The distinction between flagrant and non-flagrant infringements of the Treaty in the old Rhine Pact derived primarily from the inclusion in the Pact of the demilitarization clauses, which is of course now irrelevant.

*Re Paragraph 5*—The British may reproach us with the fact that the German draft for an air pact communicated to them in the summer of last year<sup>5</sup> differs substantially from our present attitude in that, at that time, we declared ourselves in agreement with reciprocal assistance in the air between all five Locarno Powers. In answer to this, we can point out that since then the political situation has radically altered

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<sup>5</sup> See vol. IV of this Series, document No. 106, enclosure.

and that indeed the British themselves do not desire a guarantee for the relationship between Britain and Italy.

We assume that the British will not make known in the press even the fact of our having communicated our Memorandum.

NEURATH

[Enclosure]

• BERLIN, October 12, 1936.

Pol. I 2538

#### MEMORANDUM

The German Government have the honour to express their views as follows with regard to the questions raised in the Memorandum of His Britannic Majesty's Government of September 17, so far as this is possible without knowledge of the attitude of the other Governments concerned at this stage of the present exchange of views.

1. The German Government assume, from the terms of the invitation<sup>6</sup> conveyed to them at the time on the basis of the London communiqué of July 23, 1936,<sup>7</sup> and their reply thereto,<sup>8</sup> that the subject to be dealt with by the conference will be the replacement of the old Rhine Pact of Locarno by a new pact between Germany, Belgium, France, Great Britain and Italy. If the communiqué in question contemplates the discussion later on of yet other problems connected with the securing of European peace, a decision with regard to this (as indeed the communiqué itself indicates) can only be reached when the result of the conference of the Five Powers, with respect to the subject to be dealt with at that conference, has been arrived at. The German Government must therefore reserve till then their attitude with regard to the question whether, and if so which, other problems might, in given circumstances, come under discussion later.

2. The structure of the new pact would naturally have to take into account the political developments which have given rise to the plan for such a pact. The German Government, as already proposed in their Peace Plan of March 31, 1936,<sup>9</sup> accordingly regard obligations for non-aggression between Germany on the one hand and Belgium and France on the other, and the guaranteeing of these obligations by Great Britain and Italy, as the essential elements of the pact. The answer to the question whether these elements in the treaty should further be supplemented by non-aggression and guarantee obligations between other parties to the treaty ought to be made dependent on whether such an extension of the system of the old Rhine Pact is in the general

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 474, and footnote 4 thereto.

<sup>7</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

<sup>8</sup> Of July 31. See document No. 489.

<sup>9</sup> See document No. 242.

interests of peace and whether it can be introduced without upsetting the necessary equilibrium of the treaty system. The German Government will only be able to form their final judgement on this point when they have been informed of the views of the other Governments concerned.

3. The German Government, in their Peace Plan of March 31, 1936, have already declared themselves prepared for a renunciation of aggression *vis-à-vis* Belgium and France unrestricted by any exceptions. From their standpoint they have no cause to weaken, by demanding exceptions of any kind whatever, the safeguard for peace which lies in the conclusion of such an agreement for the renunciation of aggression. In case the other participating Governments should think it necessary to insist on making exceptions of this kind, it would be for them to put forward proposals to this end. Meanwhile the German Government must indicate already at this stage that they do not consider the method proposed by His Britannic Majesty's Government in their Memorandum of September 17 to be practicable. In Article 2 of the old Rhine Pact, to which the Memorandum refers, the exceptions to the renunciation of aggression which are of importance in practice are laid down with reference to the provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and in particular to Article 16 thereof. The renewed application of this method is, in the view of the German Government, precluded, if only because the interpretation of Article 16 has led to the well-known differences of opinion between Germany and the other Locarno Powers, and, furthermore, because the outcome of the discussion regarding the future scope of Article 16 and other provisions of the Covenant of the League of Nations is at present still quite open.

4. The German Government do not consider it necessary, or appropriate either, to leave it to the Council of the League of Nations to decide whether an infringement of the obligation of non-aggression has taken place and consequently whether the guarantee obligation has come into play.

It will, however, be necessary to examine whether such decisions should not be reached jointly by those parties to the treaty who are not, in a given case, directly involved in the conflict. A distinction between flagrant breaches of the treaty and other kinds of breaches of the treaty, such as was laid down in the old Rhine Pact, will no longer come into question in the new pact.

5. The obligations of non-aggression to be agreed upon will, naturally, have to extend also to air attacks. Equally, the rendering of assistance by the guarantor Powers would have to cover their air forces also. The German Government, therefore, share the view of His Britannic Majesty's Government that there is no necessity for a special air pact.

6. The German Government consider it appropriate that the parties to the treaty, especially those between whom obligations of non-



aggression are agreed upon, should at the same time conclude agreements for the settlement, by suitable peaceful procedures, of the disputes arising between them.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Under Ang. 3 of Oct. 13 (5949/E437728) copies of the document here printed and of the enclosure were sent to the Missions in Paris and Brussels with instructions to refrain from any statements about the enclosure to the respective Governments until further notice. Under Ang. V of Oct. 14 (5949/E437729) copies of the enclosure were sent to the Missions in Warsaw, The Hague, Prague and to the Consulate at Geneva with instructions that neither the text nor the fact of its having been communicated were to be made known until further notice.

## No. 597

7253/E532205-08

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Embassy in Italy*<sup>1</sup>

Telegram

IMMEDIATE

BERLIN, October 14, 1936—11:40 p.m.

No. 255 of October 14

e.o. W III SE 4330 Ang. I.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 189,<sup>2</sup> 192,<sup>3</sup> 195,<sup>4</sup> despatch No. 4363<sup>5</sup> and our telegram No. 251.<sup>6</sup>

According to the final sentence of your telegram No. 195, Ciano will be accompanied by political advisers only. You should therefore point out to him once again that we regard economic questions as an important and inseparable part of the Berlin conversations.

There follows below the text of our proposals for the formulation of the economic portion of the internal Berlin protocol:<sup>7</sup>

I. Prior to any international conference on questions relating to economic and currency policy, the German and Italian Governments will come to an understanding beforehand on their attitude and will, as far as is possible, follow a joint line at these conferences.

II. The Italian Government will support Germany's efforts to obtain colonies with a view to securing a source of raw materials of her [Germany's] own. Likewise, they will further Germany's efforts to facilitate, by other means should circumstances require, her intake of raw materials.

III. Economic policy in the Danubian region.

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed was sent over the signature of Ritter; this has been deleted and Neurath's name inserted on the Rome copy (7213/E530029-32) which is marked: "Altered on instructions from Berlin. Sch[aumburg], Oct. 15." See also footnote 9 below.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 572.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 583.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 593.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7218/E530141-43). This despatch of Sept. 23, 1936, dealt with the question of including Abyssinia in the German-Italian clearing arrangement.

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 595.

<sup>7</sup> Typewritten marginal note at this point: "N.B. Herr von Hassell has already been informed by telephone that the present instructions will reach him already tomorrow, so that he can make an appointment in good time with Count Ciano for their conversation."



(1) The German and Italian Governments will keep each other currently informed of the basic principles governing their commercial policies in the Danubian region. The two Governments will inform each other beforehand of any important measures contemplated, such as, for example, the denunciation of treaties, or counter measures against commercial policy measures by one of the Danubian States.

(2) The two Governments will in future too jointly resist all endeavours to set up in the Danubian region, without the simultaneous participation of both Germany and Italy, new economic organizations, conceivably along the lines of an economic amalgamation [*Zusammenschluss*] of the Little Entente or in the sense of the Tardieu Plan.<sup>8</sup>

[(3) Neither of the two States will enter upon negotiations with any Danubian State for the conclusion of a preference treaty without previously informing the other. Before any such treaty is brought into force, the agreement of the other State shall be obtained.]<sup>9</sup>

#### IV. Abyssinia.

(1) On the occasion of the German recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia, the Italian Government declare that they agree to the German-Italian Commercial Treaty of October 31, 1925,<sup>10</sup> the German-Italian Clearing Agreement of September 26, 1934,<sup>11</sup> together with the supplementary agreements subsequently concluded, being extended to the Italian colonies and possessions, including Abyssinia. In addition, there will be concluded in respect of the colonies and possessions appropriate agreements, such as are contained, in respect of commercial relations with the Kingdom of Italy, in the German-Italian Agreement of

<sup>8</sup> See document No. 523, footnote 15.

<sup>9</sup> The passage in square brackets has been crossed out in both the Berlin draft and the Rome copy. A marginal note at this point on the Berlin draft reads: "Subsequently deleted." A marginal note on the Rome copy reads: "Deleted on instructions from Berlin. Sch[au]mburg, Oct. 15." A minute by Ritter dated Oct. 15(7253/E532211-12) reads: "Telegram No. 255 to Rome was, owing to the need for speed, despatched last night over my signature, under reservation of the Foreign Minister's subsequent approval. The Foreign Minister has approved the telegram except for Section III, point 3. He told me that during the recent Göring-Schuschnigg meeting in Budapest [on Oct. 10 (see also document No. 600 with footnotes thereto)], Minister President Colonel General Göring had proposed to Herr Schuschnigg an increase in German-Austrian economic activity. Herr Schuschnigg took a fairly favourable view of this. After this occurrence we will, contrary to previous expectations, now have to reckon with the possibility of pretty comprehensive economic negotiations with Austria being embarked upon in the near future. In view of this possibility the Foreign Minister did not want to have his hands tied by an agreement with Italy à la Section III, point 3. I pointed out to the Foreign Minister that he had already authorized Herr von Hassell, in the despatch (W III SE 2804 [document No. 523]) of Aug. 31, to make such a proposal to Italy and that meantime Herr von Hassell had done so. It might therefore be remarked in Rome if this passage were now lacking. Nonetheless the Foreign Minister preferred that the proposal should not now be renewed. Thereupon I telephoned Rome and gave Prince Schaumburg instructions for Herr v. Hassell to drop Section III, point 3. Prince Schaumburg told me our telegram was still being deciphered. He said he had clearly understood my instructions and would convey them to Herr v. Hassell. I asked him to tell Herr v. Hassell that if he were in any doubt he should telephone me again beforehand."

<sup>10</sup> See League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. LII, p. 179.

<sup>11</sup> See vol. III of this Series, document No. 155 and footnote 6 thereto.

April 16, 1935, on the exchange of goods, together with the supplementary agreements thereto.<sup>12</sup>

(2) The Italian Government will as far as possible promote the endeavours of German trade and industry to take part in the economic exploitation of Abyssinia.

(3) The Italian Government declare that they are prepared to enter at once into conversations on the treatment of concessions acquired by German Reich nationals in Abyssinia, and to conduct these conversations in a most benevolent and friendly spirit.

(4) The Italian Government further declare that they are prepared to treat sympathetically the question of compensation for persons of Reich German nationality settled in Abyssinia, and, in fixing such compensation, to treat these Reich German nationals no less favourably than Italian nationals in Abyssinia.

(5) The treaties and agreements necessary for the implementation of points (1) to (4) above shall be concluded as soon as possible. The negotiations on points (1) to (3) shall be entrusted to the German and Italian Government Committees for the settlement of German-Italian economic relations; these Committees shall hold their next joint session as soon as possible.

I attach great importance to agreement being reached, if possible before Ciano arrives in Berlin, with the Italian Government on the terms set out above. You should therefore see Ciano tomorrow if possible.<sup>13</sup>

You should report by telegram.

RITTER<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 344, footnote 16.

<sup>13</sup> Marginal notes on the Rome copy (see footnote 1 above): (i) "[Herr] Schm[id] Kr[utina]: Please telephone Ritter's department and say that Ciano is in Milan today. The only prospect of success, however, lies in a personal conversation with him. Moreover I request that my yesterday's telegram No. 199 of [Oct.] 14 [document No. 602] be taken into account and that I be given additional instructions for tomorrow. H[assell], Oct. 15." (ii) "Note: I have this morning already discussed with Herr Clodius the fact that Ciano is not here today; thus, on the Ambassador's instructions, no further telephone conversation with Berlin took place. S[chmid] K[rutina], Oct. 15." In a further marginal note Hassell gave instructions for three portions of the document here printed, namely Sections I and II, Section III omitting point 3, and Section IV, to be translated into Italian on three separate sheets of paper.

<sup>14</sup> Under Ang. II of Oct. 15 (7253/E532210) copies of document No. 583 and of the document here printed were sent to the Legation in Vienna.

No. 598

6483/E485770-71

*Memorandum by the Director of the Economic Policy Department*

BERLIN, October 14, 1936.

W VIII b SA 1474.

Commander Niebuhr, our newly appointed Naval Attaché for Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, paid me a farewell visit today,

when he informed me that he had also been instructed to interest himself, in particular, in orders for armaments of all kinds from Germany. I told him that the task entrusted to him and his intention of devoting himself specially to it was warmly welcomed in the Foreign Ministry and in the German Missions in South America to which he had been attached. The Defence Ministry [*Wehrministerium*] was for several reasons more interested in such orders today than previously. The capacity now achieved by the German armaments industry probably exceeded future normal requirements. Consequently, we must consider already now how to make use of future superfluous capacity. Moreover, the Defence Ministry was, in consequence of the present foreign exchange position and the existing clearing methods, particularly interested in obtaining raw materials through the clearing system. It was precisely in regard to the South American States to which he had been seconded that there most frequently arose the difficulty that we could not obtain more raw materials because our exports thither did not suffice to offset them.

In this connexion I gave Commander Niebuhr an account of our commercial policy both in general and more particularly with regard to the South American countries. Furthermore, I advised him to cooperate in these matters very closely with our Missions, who would certainly welcome his collaboration.

RITTER

### No. 599

M286/M011969-70

#### *Memorandum by the Ambassador in Italy*

ROME, October 14, 1936.

Yesterday evening Baron Weizsäcker telephoned me and stated that, on the Foreign Minister's instructions, he was to inform me of the following:<sup>1</sup>

It was certain beyond any doubt that France had replied to the British Memorandum. In these circumstances we had deemed it necessary to reply at once, if only in order to avoid having, in this, our first statement, to go into the French arguments. Consequently Prince Bismarck was to communicate our reply this afternoon in London.<sup>2</sup> Its

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<sup>1</sup> In a memorandum of Oct. 13 (2558/523917), Weizsäcker recorded a telephone conversation of even date with Hassell, who objected to the proposed communication of the German reply to the British Memorandum before Ciano's visit to Berlin, as liable to arouse Italian displeasure. In telegram No. 196 of Oct. 13 (3317/E007782) Hassell gave his reasons, and requested instructions on what explanation to give the Italians and on whether the Five Power Conference was still to be on the agenda for the Ciano visit.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 596.



contents took the Italian points of view most fully into account. Meanwhile Attolico had put in another appearance, had expressed lively regret at the German decision to reply and had attempted to obtain a further postponement. This attitude was obviously due to instructions from Rome, because the previous day, when he was informed of our decision,<sup>3</sup> he had evinced no dissatisfaction at all. The German side had refused any postponement—and had done so pretty outspokenly—because this schoolmasterly behaviour was felt to be intolerable. As a result of the two conversations with Attolico, my position here had been made easier in that I did not need to enter further into a substantial discussion, but could point out that everything had already been said to Attolico. Moreover the same view had certainly not been taken in Berlin as apparently obtained in Rome, namely, that an obligation existed to reply only after the visit had taken place. In any case, the very fact that there was far-reaching agreement between the German and Italian points of view had made it seem expedient not to send the two replies, so to speak, jointly as the result of the visit.

I promised to go and see Ciano this afternoon and to act accordingly. With regard to the matter itself, I confined myself to remarking that I had never spoken of any obligation, though I had been of the opinion that, in the absence of any reservations on our part with regard to their wishes, the Italians could certainly count on our not replying until after the visit either.<sup>4</sup>

H[ASSELL]

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 596, footnote 4.

<sup>4</sup> A memorandum dated Oct. 14 (M286/M011968) by the Counsellor of Legation of the Embassy in Rome reads: "Secretary of Legation von Marchthaler, on instructions from Herr von Weizsäcker, has informed the Ambassador as follows: It is confirmed that the subject remains on the agenda in its entirety; as the whole matter is in its initial stage there is still ample material for discussion."

## No. 600

7681/E547657-60

*Minister Mackensen to Foreign Minister Neurath*

BUDAPEST, October 14, 1936.

MY DEAR FATHER:<sup>1</sup> On the morning of his departure Colonel General Göring gave me some more details about his conversations with Schuschnigg, whom he had met personally for the first time in his life, and with Ciano.<sup>2</sup> As some of this may be of interest to you, I have dictated the enclosed memoranda on the subject.<sup>3</sup> I did not think it

<sup>1</sup> Mackensen was Neurath's son-in-law.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 589; Ciano and Schuschnigg were also attending Gömbös' funeral.

<sup>3</sup> For the first enclosure, i.e., the memorandum of Göring's conversation with Schuschnigg, see vol. I of series D, document No. 169. The second memorandum is printed as the enclosure to the present document.



appropriate to employ the form of a despatch, as the Colonel General repeatedly stressed the confidential nature of what he was telling me.

A conversation of some length, which he had towards the end of the dinner and while Schuschnigg and Ciano were already leaving, with Kánya, upon whom he had not during previous visits bestowed his views on foreign policy, pleased the latter greatly by the very fact of its taking place. I am therefore glad that it came about, particularly as Sztójay had urgently requested me to arrange it if at all possible. Nothing of interest, apparently, resulted from it. As Colonel General Göring told me in reply to my specific question, the minorities question<sup>4</sup> was not mentioned. Colonel General Göring spoke in somewhat unfavourable terms about the impression of Kánya's personality which he had derived from this particular conversation—which is not surprising in view of the complete dissimilarity of the two men.

Since then I have had a useful conversation on the minorities question with Hóman,<sup>5</sup> the Minister for Culture, which lasted for more than two hours and which I continued yesterday with his State Secretary, Szily.<sup>6</sup> The conversation with Kozma,<sup>7</sup> which had been arranged for last Saturday, had to be postponed indefinitely as the result of the Cabinet reshuffle.<sup>8</sup> The same applies to the proposed conversations with Kánya and Darányi. I hope to be able to report verbally on these when we meet at Bayreuth.

With cordial greetings,

Your obedient son,

V. M[ACKENSEN]

[Enclosure]

MEMORANDUM ON THE MEETING BETWEEN COLONEL GENERAL  
GÖRING AND COUNT CIANO, THE ITALIAN FOREIGN MINISTER

BUDAPEST, October 13, 1936.

Already during the funeral ceremonies, Colonel General Göring had an opportunity of talking to Count Ciano, who walked beside him during the two-hour procession to the cemetery. A further and more fruitful opportunity presented itself at the dinner given by the [then] Deputy Minister President, His Excellency de Darányi, when, after having conversed with Federal Chancellor Schuschnigg, Colonel General Göring conversed *tête-à-tête* at some length with Count Ciano. From what he told me I gather that he has formed an unexpectedly favourable opinion of Count Ciano's capabilities, and that at least he recognizes

<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 555 and footnote 2 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> Dr. V. Hóman, Hungarian Minister for Culture and Education.

<sup>6</sup> Dr. K. Szily, State Secretary in the Hungarian Ministry for Culture and Education.

<sup>7</sup> Vitez N. Kozma, Hungarian Minister for the Interior.

<sup>8</sup> On Oct. 12 a new Hungarian Cabinet was formed, with Dr. Kálmán de Darányi as Minister President.

that Count Ciano became Foreign Minister at the age of 34 on his own merits and not merely because he was Mussolini's son-in-law. It seems to have pleased him particularly that Ciano should have spoken about the necessity for a rejuvenation and revivification of the whole Italian foreign service apparatus. On the other hand, Count Ciano advanced many theories which the Colonel General felt bound to dispute. Thus, for example, the Italian [Foreign Minister] advocated freedom of action for Italy in the Mediterranean in return for German freedom of action in the Baltic, a view whose absurdity the Colonel General brought home to him. In the question of Spain, Ciano touched upon Italy's territorial claims, which seemed to amount to a naval base in the Balearic Islands and the occupation of Ceuta. In reply to this Colonel General Göring emphasized that our interests in Spain were purely economic, but that we certainly attached importance to their undisturbed development.

Count Ciano was otherwise at pains to represent all the measures of British policy as being, primarily, at any rate, aimed against Germany. In reply to this, the Colonel General quoted a number of practical instances which, as the Italian [Foreign Minister] was unable to deny, hardly concerned us at all, but which proved quite clearly that British policy did not regard British relations with Italy in their present shape as the final settlement.

## No. 601

7263/E532780-82

*Ambassador Ribbentrop to Acting State Secretary Dieckhoff*

PERSONAL

BERLIN, October 14, 1936.

Received October 15.

DEAR HANS: First of all I wish you a speedy recovery and hope that you will soon be quite well again. One has to be very careful with anything affecting the jaw, as Annelies' <sup>1</sup> experiences show, and I advise you to get quite well before coming out again into the raw weather.

Enclosed I am sending you carbon copies of some letters, <sup>2</sup> which I have also brought to Herr Prüfer's knowledge, concerning the London Embassy, and to Herr von Hassel [*sic*]. I would ask you to take note of them personally, but apart from this I would prefer not to pursue the matter further but rather to settle it with the Military Attachés direct.

An additional reason for this note is the following:

<sup>1</sup> Frau von Ribbentrop.

<sup>2</sup> Not found; see footnote 6 below.

I received from the Foreign Minister's Bureau today the reply<sup>3</sup> to the British Note about the Five Power Conference,<sup>4</sup> with the additional communication to the Embassy in London.<sup>5</sup> I have not been put in the picture about the preliminary work that led to this Note being drawn up, and, although Dr. Kordt has enquired several times of the competent departments, he was told nothing of the intention of despatching a Note soon or of its contents.

Since, in principle, the Foreign Minister's instructions, based on the Führer's wish, are that I am to be kept currently informed of all major foreign policy steps, I should be grateful if you would let me know why this has not happened in the present case, especially since it concerns a matter which, after all, pertains to the most immediate of my personal interests and also of my political activities.

Once again, a speedy recovery and

Heil Hitler!

Yours ever,

JOACHIM

P.S.—I should be grateful if I could have the enclosed copies back in the course of this evening or early tomorrow morning, since I have made an appointment with the Foreign Minister and will need them then.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 596, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 596.

<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "*Urgent.* Counsellor v. Barga: Please have Herr v. Ribbentrop thanked through Herr Kordt for his letter; I attach the enclosures and would request you to send them *immediately* to Herr v. Ribbentrop, Wilhelmstr[asse] 64.

"Please also tell Herr Kordt that I have been ill for several days and do not know why Herr v. Ribbentrop was not informed earlier. Please add that, as far as I know, the decision to reply on October 14 was not taken until October 12 or 13; the matter was therefore obviously regarded as urgent since we wanted to forestall the communication of the French Note to us. D[ieckhoff], Oct. 15."

## No. 602

7253/E532218-23

### *The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 199 of October 14

ROME, October 15, 1936—1:05 a.m.

Received October 15—5:45 a.m.

W III SE 4362.

With reference to your telegrams Nos. 248 of [October] 12<sup>1</sup> and 251 of [October] 13<sup>2</sup> and also to the telephone conversation with Clodius.<sup>3</sup>

I have today informed Ciano, as instructed, of the German decision to reply to the British Memorandum today. Ciano did not conceal his

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 585.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 595.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 597 and footnote 13 thereto.



disappointment and said that he did not wish to deny that at first he had been far from pleased. Attolico had meanwhile explained the German motives to him in detail and he now understood that what was involved was a tactical move, occasioned in particular by the French reply. I then communicated to Ciano the substance of telegram No. 251 and gave him a sketch for an announcement in the sense of paragraph 3. At the same time, on the basis of my telephone conversation with Clodius, I said that I expected further instructions tomorrow on economic questions, especially in respect of Ethiopia and the Danubian region, which I would like to discuss with him after his return from Milan on Friday.<sup>4</sup> I referred expressly to the necessity for precise assurances in respect of our economic interest in Abyssinia. To this last he agreed in principle. I have, however, the impression that it will not be altogether easy to reach precise agreements as the Italians take the line that conditions are not yet stabilized, so that in itself [*sic*]<sup>5</sup> it is difficult to lay down precise provisions. However, my remark about extending the Commercial Treaty<sup>6</sup> to Abyssinia met with no basic opposition. Ciano ended by remarking in this connexion that his stay in Berlin would not suffice to reach really detailed economic agreements, so that we would have to confine ourselves to laying down principles.

Then, having called in Buti, Ciano gave me three drafts, i.e. (1) an announcement about the Führer's informing Ciano of our recognition of Abyssinia and Ciano's expressing satisfaction at and appreciation of this step; (2) a draft of a final communiqué which runs as follows:

"In the various conversations etc., the discussion covered current political, economic and social questions of major importance, and specifically those of direct concern to both countries. The conversations took place in an atmosphere of friendly cordiality and it was established to the satisfaction of the two parties that their views accord as does the intention of the two Governments jointly to direct their action (*azione comune*) towards furthering the general aim of peace and reconstruction. The two Governments have resolved to keep in touch with one another with a view to realizing these endeavours."

Comparing it with the German outline, the stress laid on friendly cordiality, the intention of joint action, and the resolve to keep in touch with one another should be noted.

(3) A draft of an internal protocol with the following text:

#### Translation<sup>7</sup>

<sup>4</sup> i.e., Oct. 16.

<sup>5</sup> The words "in itself" do not appear in the Rome draft (M297/M012687-91, 95-98).

<sup>6</sup> See document No. 597, footnote 10.

<sup>7</sup> At this point the Rome draft reads: "(Insert from Annex). Translation." The passages printed in quotation marks are attached as an annex to the Rome draft.



[“]Draft Protocol (not to be published)

### *Locarno*

The two Governments concur in the view that the new Locarno ought not to depart from the distinguishing characteristics of the old Locarno and that it should therefore adhere to the principle of a bilateral Franco-German non-aggression pact which is guaranteed by Britain and Italy and ought not to be transformed into a regional pact with reciprocal guarantees. They are opposed to regional pacts even if only trilateral. Both Governments are likewise in accord that the clauses relating to the demilitarization of the Rhineland should be removed from the new pact and, as regards the “exceptions”, the Italian Government are prepared to support the German Government to the end that the Franco-Soviet Pact should not be included among such “exceptions” nor, in so far as it might take effect in the same sense, the Franco-Czechoslovak Treaty.

### *The League of Nations*

As long as Italy remains in the League of Nations, she will have full regard to the common interests of both countries in her policies within the League. The two Governments will keep in contact with each other for this purpose. Should Italy decide to withdraw from the League of Nations, then the German Government would recognize that such a decision represented a new factor for Germany, which would suffice to release her from her obligations in this connexion, entered into [sic]<sup>8</sup> on March 7 and March 31, 1936. In such case, Germany would only return to Geneva in agreement with Italy.

### *Colonial Equality of Rights*

Italy is prepared to recognize Germany's colonial equality of rights and to give her diplomatic support in obtaining such recognition from third States also.<sup>9</sup>

### *Communism*

The two Governments recognize that Communism is the greatest danger threatening the peace and the security of Europe and they confirm their purpose to combat Communist propaganda with all their strength, adapting their own actions to this view.

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<sup>8</sup> The Rome draft here reads: “entered into by her declarations of Mar. 7 and Mar. 31 [see documents Nos. 3 and 242]”.

<sup>9</sup> In telegram No. 257 of Oct. 15 (7253/E532228) Ritter stated: “Re the paragraph on colonial equality of rights: the formula proposed by Italy seems to us somewhat too platonic. It could be taken to mean that it was merely a matter of rescinding the defamation of Germany in respect of her colonial policy in the Treaty of Versailles. This can naturally not suffice for us; on the contrary, for us it is a question of the actual allocation of colonies. You should therefore insist on a formula corresponding to the ideas contained in our telegram No. 255 [document No. 597], Section II.”

## Spain

As the Nationalists have occupied the great part of Spain and as the Italian and German Governments have considerable economic interests there, the two Governments will proceed as soon as possible to the recognition of the Spanish National Government *de facto* and they will keep in touch with one another in order to proceed later to *de jure* recognition. When they announce this the two Governments will not yet [*sic*]<sup>10</sup> confirm the principle of non-intervention and respect for the integrity and territorial unity of Spain and her colonies. In the declaration of recognition, they will also stress that they are recognizing the National Government by reason of the proofs afforded by this Government in the restoration of order and civil discipline in the country.

## German-Italian Economic Cooperation in the Danube Basin

The two Governments recognize the possibility and usefulness of such cooperation, the modalities and limits of which will subsequently be studied by the appropriate technical authorities; the Stresa Agreements,<sup>11</sup> the Italian Memorandum of September 29, 1933,<sup>12</sup> the Italian-Austrian-Hungarian Protocols of Rome of 1934,<sup>13</sup> and the recently concluded Austrian-German Treaty,<sup>14</sup> shall remain the basis for such cooperation. Contact between the technical authorities will begin with an examination of the German *Pro Memoria* of October 12, 1936,<sup>15</sup> which is, indeed, based on the general principle of Italian-German economic cooperation in the Danube Basin, a principle which is recognized by both Governments.

## Manchukuo

The Italian Government have informed the German Government<sup>16</sup> that they are in touch with the Japanese Government—on the latter's

<sup>10</sup> The words "not yet" do not appear in the Rome draft.

<sup>11</sup> See document No. 129, footnote 6.

<sup>12</sup> See document No. 523, footnote 9.

<sup>13</sup> See document No. 165, footnotes 2 and 3.

<sup>14</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 755 and document No. 511, footnote 15.

<sup>15</sup> See document No. 583, footnote 4.

<sup>16</sup> In telegram No. 193 of Oct. 12 (348/201789) Hassell reported: "Ciano told me today that he wished to inform me in confidence that Italo-Japanese relations had recently taken on a warmer tone. Common hostility to Bolshevism provided sufficient occasion for this. On the other hand, in consequence of China's formal participation in Sanctions and of some unnecessary anti-Italian expressions by Chiang Kai-shek, relations with China, formerly very intimate by reason of close Italian collaboration, had now cooled off a little, for all Italian advisers, officers and technicians were remaining in China as hitherto. After he (Ciano) had discussed the friendly shaping of Italo-German relations with the [Japanese] Ambassador in Rome, Sugimura, the Japanese Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs had gone into the matter with the Ambassador and had suggested that, at first without formal mutual recognition of Manchukuo, Italian Consulates, which did not exist at present, should be set up there, and Japanese [Consulates] in Abyssinia. This had now been agreed upon. Over and above this and cultural *rapprochement*, no more far reaching agreements with Japan were on the agenda for the time being. In saying this Ciano stressed the words 'for the time being'. He said he believed that this attitude also accorded in principle with the lines of our own policy; perhaps, during his Berlin visit, the recognition of Italian Abyssinia, of Manchukuo and of the Nationalist Spanish Government, could all be discussed together."

initiative—over an exchange of consular representatives, an exchange which could be a prelude to the recognition of the new State. The two Governments will consult with one another so that, should recognition be decided on, they would proceed jointly.[”]

Ciano added that he was naturally ready to include an addition on German economic rights in Abyssinia. Moreover, he again made it clear how very important he considered it that these documents, after agreement with us, should be submitted to Mussolini for his approval before his [Ciano's] departure, in order that there should be no further need to refer back from Berlin. He therefore asked me to ascertain from my Government their desires concerning alterations or expansions of these drafts, so that we could discuss them on Friday and, if possible, determine their approximate text.

I should therefore be grateful if you could communicate to me by early on Friday, as a supplement to any instructions that may now be on the way, what alterations I am to propose.

HASSELL

### No. 603

7253/E532215-17

*The Director of the Economic Policy Department to the Legation  
in Austria*

Telegram

IMMEDIATE  
No. 133

BERLIN, October 15, 1936—5:40 p.m.  
zu W III SE 4337.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 129 of October 13.<sup>1</sup>

I. We had already recently received similar reports about Italo-Czechoslovak efforts from another source and had instructed the German Embassy in Rome to investigate these.<sup>2</sup> Thereupon the German Embassy in Rome reported on October 12<sup>3</sup> that the Italian Foreign Minister, Count Ciano, had described such negotiations with Czechoslovakia as pure invention. Nothing of the kind was envisaged for the Vienna conference. Quite apart from this assurance from Ciano we think it unlikely that the Italian Government would be inclined formally to admit the Little Entente as a whole or Czechoslovakia by herself into the Rome Pact or even to bring them into some other form of closer relationship with it. It is, however, the case that, in connexion with Britain's political activity in the Mediterranean area, recently

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7253/E532213). In this telegram Papen reported that his Yugoslav colleague had drawn attention to continuous Italian and Czech endeavours to bring the Little Entente into the economic arrangements of the Rome Protocols within the framework of a general Danubian pact.

<sup>2</sup> In telegram No. 242 of Oct. 10 (3250/E000198); see document No. 583, footnote 5.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 583.



Italy too has been seeking an improvement in relations with Yugoslavia and Rumania.

II. I would recommend your cultivating your contacts with your Yugoslav colleague as much as possible in these questions so that we may be kept currently informed from that quarter as to proceedings and endeavours within the Little Entente. I should also be grateful if you could let us have detailed information at once by telegram about the progress of the Vienna meeting of the Protocol Powers.<sup>4</sup>

III. For your information only.

During the Italian Foreign Minister's impending visit to Berlin an agreement in quite general terms will probably be reached to the effect that Germany and Italy will keep closely in touch over economic policy in the Danubian region and will mutually undertake not to enter into any new economic combinations in the Danubian region without the other country's participation. There have already been preliminary discussions with Rome on this matter. A despatch on the subject follows.<sup>5</sup>

RITTER<sup>6</sup>

<sup>4</sup> For further details of the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Austria, Hungary and Italy in Vienna, Nov. 11-12, see vol. vi of this Series.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 597, footnote 14.

<sup>6</sup> The document here printed is preceded in the files by a minute by Ritter also dated Oct. 15 (7253/E532214) which reads: "I have in the meanwhile told the Foreign Minister with regard to telegram No. 129 of October 13 from Vienna [see footnote 1 above] that we had already, previous to this telegram, learned of similar rumours of Italo-Czechoslovak desires and had consequently made enquiries in Rome. Herr von Hassell had spoken of these rumours in Rome and had reported in his telegram No. 192 of October 12 [document No. 583], paragraph 2, that Ciano had described any such negotiations with Czechoslovakia as pure invention. In this case I gave credence to the Italian assurance.

"The Foreign Minister was also of the opinion that specific Italo-Czechoslovak negotiations concerning accession to the Rome Pact or the like were improbable. On the other hand he knew from various sources, and particularly from Attolico's utterances, that the Italian Government had recently been at great pains to improve relations with Yugoslavia and Rumania with an eye to Anglo-Italian relations. In this connexion Italy would certainly be willing to make economic concessions, too, to these countries."

## No. 604

6180/E464375

### *The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

Letter-Telegram

SECRET

No. 64 of October 15

BRUSSELS, October 15, 1936.

Received October 16—6:10 p.m.

Pol. II 2298.

With reference to my letter-telegram No. 63 of October 15<sup>1</sup> and to the memorandum submitted with my letter to Rintelen of October 10.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> In this letter-telegram (3325/E008170) Richthofen reported on hostile Belgian press comments on the agreement between the Rexist movement and the National Flemings (see also document No. 581).

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 582.



The envenomed propaganda carried on with all means at its disposal by the Rexist movement, and the agreement concluded on October 8 between the Rexistists and the National Flemings, have caused tremendous excitement among the Belgian public and have evoked corresponding counter-propaganda, in which, in order to discredit the Rexistists, the argument is increasingly being used that the Rexistists are receiving material support from us. In this connexion allegations are being made about facts from the mention of which it may be concluded that there is strict supervision of the Rexist movement and its personalities. Amongst other things it is stated that Degrelle visited Cologne on October 9 and that paper was supplied in contravention of the provisions of the German-Belgian Payments Agreement.<sup>3</sup>

As Wyns<sup>4</sup> is to negotiate with Reich Minister Goebbels in Berlin on October 16 and 17, I consider it essential that he and any other German quarters concerned should have their attention drawn to this.

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 511, footnote 7.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 507.

## No. 605

116/66254-56

### *Unsigned Memorandum*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 15, 1936.

#### MINUTE CONCERNING DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THE DANZIG SENATE AND THE POLISH GOVERNMENT<sup>2</sup>

1) The subject of Danzig cannot be separated from general policy. According to the way it is dealt with, it prejudices or eases German-Polish relations very appreciably. The Danzig Senate must therefore cooperate closely with the Foreign Ministry.

2) The aim of Danzig policy must be to make Danzig free and once more an integral part of the Reich. At present that would not be possible without a *coup de main*. This is out of the question at the moment, particularly since it includes the Corridor problem, which is not as yet ripe.

3) For the time being, therefore, the dependence, in international law, of Danzig on the League of Nations is a regrettable fact. A change

<sup>1</sup> An earlier undated draft (97/108197-99) is signed by Weizsäcker. Its first two paragraphs, which have been crossed out, read: "According to information from Danzig, Gauleiter Forster will travel thence to Berlin this evening, to endeavour to seek out the Führer either here or in South Germany and—either beforehand or afterwards—also to see the Foreign Minister. In preparation for this visit a memorandum has been drawn up which still, however, needs certain amendments. In case Forster should announce his arrival as early as tomorrow, Sunday, I submit a few points of view herewith." See also documents Nos. 575 and 584.

<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "Fair copy given to Gauleiter Forster by the Foreign Minister today. Kol[tze], Oct. 15."

in the person of the Commissioner may become necessary, as in the case of Lester. This, however, is only to cure the symptom, not to heal the disease.

4) A further transfer of the rights of the League of Nations from the Commissioner to Poland, or the appointment of a Polish Commissioner, can ease matters for Danzig as long as German-Polish relations are as good as they are today. As soon as this ceased to be the case, the hand of Poland would weigh intolerably on Danzig. (One only needs to reflect that the High Commissioner has the right, on his own authority, to bring Polish troops into Danzig territory with a view to maintaining order!)

5) The interference of the High Commissioner in the internal affairs of Danzig is an undesirable encroachment on the Free City. It is permitted, however, by a legal position which can hardly be shaken at present. (Constitutional changes in Danzig require a two-thirds majority approval by the population and the approval of the Council of the League.) For this reason, only a *de facto* but not a *de jure* easing of the situation can at present be aimed at.

6) *In these circumstances it will be advisable for Danzig*

(a) jointly with Poland to seek for a neutral successor to Lester, whose personal character would be such that he would be likely to refrain from superfluous activity, but who, if need be, would none the less uphold Danzig's rights against Poland;

(b) to bring the necessary internal measures in Danzig to a certain conclusion so that Poland, at the next session of the Council of the League, can report to the latter that the internal situation in Danzig has now become peaceful;

(c) to make no concessions to the Poles in these discussions such as would render the later reincorporation of Danzig in the Reich more difficult. (Assimilation of currencies, privileges for minorities, penetration of the administration by Polish influence in the postal service, the railways, the harbour, etc.);

(d) to conduct the negotiations with Poland in the closest liaison with the [German] Foreign Ministry.

No. 606

1160/326566-69

*The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

A 412

BRUSSELS, October 15, 1936.

Received October 16.

Pol. II 2300.

Subject: Speech by the King of the Belgians on Belgian foreign and military policy.

The speech, which King Leopold III made yesterday<sup>1</sup> to the Council of Ministers over which he presided and which, contrary to all usage, has been published in full in this morning's newspapers, represents an event of the first magnitude in European politics. Each separate passage of the speech is of such importance that a report could only replace a study of it by reproducing the contents of the speech in full. I shall therefore limit myself today to submitting the text of the speech<sup>2</sup> and making the following observations.

The utterances of the King put the final touches to a development which began with the speech made by Hymans, the Foreign Minister at the time, on March 4, 1931, and which is designed to lead Belgium back from her dependence on her war-time allies to an independent position. If Belgium's attitude between 1931 and 1935 may be described by saying that Belgium wished to pursue a policy of non-intervention and quasi neutrality limited by her commitments under the Locarno and League of Nations Pacts, then Belgian policy as it emerges from the speech of King Leopold III may be described as none other than the complete neutrality of Belgium or at most as a return to a neutrality restricted only by such commitments as arise from those provisions of the League of Nations Pact which the experience of recent years has proved to be at all workable. In this connexion it is to be noted that in the speech (at I d) the impossibility of applying Article 16 of the League of Nations' Covenant integrally was pointed out fairly openly.

In his speech the King declares himself in favour of an exclusively and wholly Belgian policy and as opposed to ties with any foreign Power. The background against which, through the years, this policy has emerged, is characterized by the statement that this policy must be resolutely directed at placing Belgium outside her neighbours' conflicts. There is no doubt that it is precisely the possibilities of conflict, to which the system of French alliances gives rise, which have created an aversion to combining Belgium's foreign policy with that of her neighbours. In this connexion, it must be noted that today this aversion is not limited, as it was about a year ago, to Flemish circles, but has taken hold of the entire Belgian population. It is therefore not quite accurate to attribute the King of the Belgians' statements and the attitude of the Belgian Government in foreign affairs to domestic influences and, above all, to pressure from the Opposition. For this policy is not dictated to the Belgian Government by the Opposition but, as has repeatedly been stated in reports from this Legation, it is a policy which in actual fact can command the almost unanimous approval of the whole population.

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<sup>1</sup> For the text of this speech see *Documents on International Affairs*, 1936, pp. 223-227.

<sup>2</sup> Not reprinted.

What attitude the Belgian Government will adopt towards a new Five Power pact and towards the League of Nations Covenant, in view of the present statements by the King, cannot be ascertained in detail from the speech. Nevertheless the speech gives general indications which appear extremely important:

"Our military policy, like our foreign policy, by which military policy is determined, must set as its aim, not to prepare for a more or less victorious war as a result of a coalition, but to keep war away from our territory. . . . Our geographical situation compels us to maintain a military apparatus of such dimensions that it will appear to any of our neighbours whatsoever inadvisable to use our sovereign territory for an attack against another State. Our commitments must not go beyond this. . . . Let anyone who doubts the possibility of such a foreign policy think of the proud and resolute examples of Holland and Switzerland."

In face of this important foreign policy programme, the aim pursued both by the Cabinet Council and by the King's speech, namely, to justify a certain increase in Belgian armaments, recedes, as far as our interest is concerned, somewhat into the background. The increase in armaments which Belgium considers necessary in view of the international situation and in order to fulfil her obligation to defend her territory, can be described as very modest. According to the communiqué issued at the conclusion of the Council of Ministers, the increase in armaments will consist mainly in developing the existing defence system in conformity with the new foreign policy, in increasing the period of military service for the infantry, the introduction of units voluntarily doing a longer period of service and the motorization of the cavalry corps.

The text of the King's speech and the text of the above-mentioned communiqué are enclosed in the form of cuttings from *Le Soir* of October 15 (three copies).<sup>2</sup>

RICHTHOFEN

No. 607

5950/E437747-54

*The French Ambassador in Germany to the Foreign Minister*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 15, 1936.

Pol. I 2604.

MR. MINISTER: I have had communicated to me the reply that the French Government have, for their part, made to the British Note of September 17.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This document and its enclosure are in French in the original.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 546, enclosure.



I think that you might be interested to have knowledge of it, and I therefore venture to enclose a copy herewith for your confidential information.

Pray accept, Mr. Minister, the assurances of my highest regard.

ANDRÉ FR[ANÇOIS]-PONCET

[Enclosure]

*Copy*<sup>3</sup>

September 30, 1936.

1. The Government of the Republic have examined with care the suggestions put forward by the British Government concerning the subject of the discussions which it is hoped to open in London between the five Powers signatory to the Treaty of Locarno.

2. Like the British Government, the French Government desire the discussions on this subject to take place at the earliest date on which the Powers signatory to the Treaty of Locarno can agree; much as they value the guarantees to them resulting from the assurances contained in the published letters, exchanged on April 1<sup>4</sup> last between the two Governments, they none the less consider the conclusion of a new treaty between the five Powers to be essential for the pacification of Europe.

3. The German and Italian Governments having expressed the desire, shared by the British Government, that certain points, in particular those which arise in connexion with the agreement envisaged as replacing the Treaty of Locarno, should be discussed through diplomatic channels before the meeting of the said Powers, the Government of the Republic, for the purpose of contributing forthwith to this discussion and without prejudice to the questions to which they reserve the right ultimately to draw attention, have the honour to set out the following considerations relating to the points raised in the British memorandum.

4. The French Government consider that the provisions of the Treaty of Locarno should be maintained, except for introducing the modifications and additions necessitated by present circumstances or which appear desirable in the light of the experience gained.

5. Just as the Treaty of Locarno is based upon a guarantee of the territorial *status quo* resulting from the frontiers between Germany and Belgium and Germany and France, and a guarantee of the inviolability of these frontiers, so the new agreement should be based upon the premise that there exists no territorial issue between the Contracting

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<sup>3</sup> Marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting: "Handed to the F[oreign] M[inister] on Oct. 15, [19]36, by the French Ambassador."

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 367.

Parties, and, in consequence, as regards their mutual relations, upon the several and collective guarantee of the territorial *status quo*, as well as the inviolability of the frontiers of their possessions and dependencies.<sup>5</sup>

6. Each Signatory would undertake in respect of each of the other Signatories to commit no aggression or invasion by land, sea or air, and in no case to resort to force, provided that this shall not impede the exercise by a signatory Power of the right of legitimate defence, that is to say, the right of opposing the violation of the obligation set forth above.

7. In the case of failure to observe the obligation of non-aggression, assistance (which should not form the subject of an undertaking less extensive than that deriving from the Treaty of Locarno) should be provided to the Power victim of aggression by the other signatory Powers.<sup>6</sup>

8. In reply to the question raised by the British Government, the French Government desire at once to declare that, on condition of reciprocity, they are ready to assume the obligations of guarantee and assistance envisaged above, towards each of the Powers which are to be parties to the new agreement.

9. The means of assuring, under satisfactory conditions, the automatic operation of assistance should be sought. At the very least the machinery provided for by the Treaty of Locarno (Article 4), which comprises, on the one hand, the determination of aggression by the Council of the League of Nations, and on the other, in case of a flagrant violation of the aforesaid undertaking, immediate operation of the guarantees pending a definitive pronouncement by the Council, should be maintained, together with an additional provision designed to forestall the danger of sudden aggression by air.

10. The benefit of this new treaty (and particularly the obligation of assistance deriving from it) would not be capable of being invoked by a signatory State which had defaulted on the obligations therein set forth, or which, in Europe, had proceeded against the territorial integrity or political independence of another Power, more particularly by launching an unprovoked attack upon such Power. In consequence, assistance could not come into operation against a signatory State which, in accordance with the principles of the Covenant of the League of Nations, had opposed an act of aggression committed by a contracting Party against a non-contracting State. In enunciating this principle, the Government of the Republic base themselves on the provisions contained in Article 2 of the Treaty of Locarno.

11. The Government of the Republic are in agreement with the

<sup>5</sup> On another copy of this memorandum (2558/523921-28) a marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting appears against this sentence: "New! Western Pact."

<sup>6</sup> On the second copy (see footnote 5 above) a marginal note in Dieckhoff's handwriting appears against this paragraph: "Belgium?"

British Government in considering that a sudden attack by air should in every case be regarded as a flagrant violation of the obligations undertaken, and should therefore entail immediate assistance by the other Signatories to the State victim of such attack. The relevant stipulations could either form the subject of a special protocol, or be inserted in the general treaty. Whatever may be the solution chosen, the French Government feel obliged to point out the importance which would attach to the completion of these undertakings by undertakings for the limitation of air armaments.

12. As is set forth in the arrangement made in London on March 19, 1936,<sup>7</sup> it will be necessary to envisage the conclusion of technical agreements designed to ensure, in case of need, prompt action on the part of the Signatories and to prepare the measures calculated to render effective the obligations undertaken.

13. The Government of the Republic remain attached to the Treaties of Locarno as regards the settlement of disputes by arbitral or judicial means, or by means of conciliation; the conditions stipulated for terminating these treaties have not been fulfilled: they therefore continue in force. They ought to be supplemented by means of a promise of assistance in the event of a signatory Power refusing to follow the procedure for a pacific settlement thus laid down or to give effect to the decisions taken. It is desirable, on the other hand, for analogous treaties to be concluded between such signatory Powers as have not so far concluded treaties on this subject.

14. The new agreement should be understood as not infringing the rights and obligations deriving from the Covenant of the League of Nations, nor as restricting the League's task of taking measures calculated effectively to safeguard the peace of the world.

15. It would be useful to cause this agreement to be recognized by third Powers as an act destined to ensure the maintenance of peace and to ensure that they undertake not to impede its application.

16. In submitting the above observations, the Government of the Republic have remained within the framework outlined in the British memorandum, where care is taken to point out that the list of points submitted to the attention of the other Governments is not exclusive.

In consequence it seems to them opportune to indicate at once the following additional points as deserving the attention of the Governments:

a) The suggestion made by the German Government,<sup>8</sup> which meets with no objection whatever on the part of France, that the Netherlands, should they so desire, be included in the new agreement;

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<sup>7</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 208.

<sup>8</sup> In the German Memorandum of Mar. 5; see document No. 3, enclosure.



b) consultation to be provided for amongst the signatory Powers, in case of political tension between them, with a view to rendering more efficacious the operation of Article 11 of the Covenant of the League of Nations;

c) the right of each signatory Power to set up, on its own territory, commissions for establishing the facts on the basis of the project presented to the Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments in a report by M. Bourquin (document Conf. D.C.C., 108 annex).<sup>9</sup>

17. The programme thus traced by no means exhausts the subject of the proposed negotiations with regard to the settlement of the situation created on March 7, 1936. In particular, and in conformity with the provisions drawn up on March 19, 1936, there ought to be adopted measures designed to forbid or to limit the subsequent construction of fortifications in a zone to be determined.

With all the more reason, the present memorandum does not pretend to set forth all the questions that will arise in the course of the impending Conference, questions whose solution necessarily requires the collaboration of other Powers. The memorandum has been deliberately confined to the main problems directly relating to the negotiation of the treaty which should be substituted for the Treaty of Locarno and which, therefore, under reservation of the Netherlands possibly joining in the negotiations, does not call for the participation of Powers other than those Signatories to the latter Treaty.

The Government of the Republic desire to recall that, in the spirit of the arrangement of March 19, 1936, and the London Communiqué of July 23,<sup>10</sup> these negotiations are to form the prelude to wider negotiations presupposing the collaboration of all interested Powers.

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<sup>9</sup> Actually Conf. D./C.G. 108, Annex III, "Act relating to the Establishment of Facts constituting Aggression", which forms part of the Report of the Committee on Security Questions (*Rapporteur* N. Politis of Greece), submitted to the General Commission of the Disarmament Conference on May 24, 1933. See League of Nations, *Conference for the Reduction and Limitation of Armaments, Conference Documents*, vol. II, pp. 679-685. Annex III embodied a proposal dated Mar. 4, 1933, by M. Bourquin, head of the Belgian delegation (Conference Document D./C.P. 12), for which see *ibid.*, Series D, vol. 5, Minutes of the Political Commission, Feb. 27, 1932-Mar. 10, 1933, p. 61.

<sup>10</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.



## No. 608

348/201804-807

*The Foreign Minister to the Embassy in Italy*

Telegram

URGENT  
No. 258BERLIN, October 16, [1936—2:45 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>  
[Received October 16—5:20 p.m.]<sup>1</sup>

With reference to your telegram No. 199 of October 14.<sup>2</sup>

We are in agreement with the Italian proposal for the final communiqué; likewise, in principle, with the public announcement after the reception by the Führer. This last under reservation of the Führer's approval.

For the internal protocol we suggest the following text:

1. Western Pact: Instead of Italian text we suggest saying simply: "The two Governments, in the negotiations for a Western Pact, will, as hitherto, proceed in the closest contact with one another."

2. League of Nations: We propose the following text:

"As long as Italy remains in the League of Nations, the Italian Government, in their policy within the League of Nations, will have full regard to the common interests of both countries, and for this purpose will remain in touch with the German Government. In particular also, the Italian Government will in each case enter into consultation with the German Government over the question of taking part in various activities of the League of Nations (conferences, commissions etc.).

Should Italy decide to withdraw from the League of Nations, the German Government would recognize that such a decision represented

<sup>1</sup> Taken from the Rome copy (M297/M012699-701). In three memoranda of Oct. 16 (7213/E530035; 036-37; 023-24) Hassell recorded telephone calls from Berlin concerning the instructions he was awaiting for his conversations with Ciano that day: (i) A conversation in the morning with Lorenz, who stated that the Foreign Minister's decisions on the Italian proposals [document No. 602] could not be given until that morning; part would be telephoned through at about 1 p.m.; another part, dealing with Section II, points (1) and (2) [of document No. 597] would follow by telegram; thus Hassell would only be able to speak to Ciano that day about certain of the questions involved, in particular the economic questions. The memorandum continues: "Thereupon I asked Herr Lorenz to tell Herr Ritter that the economic proposals, viewed as a whole, appeared somewhat onesided, like a list of German wishes. I would therefore propose amending Section II [of document No. 597] by putting a full stop after the words '... raw materials of her own' and then continue: 'The German and Italian Governments will also, apart from the question of colonies, strive, in common endeavour, to facilitate the supply of raw materials for both countries.' Herr Lorenz hoped to be able to let me have an answer to this question too at about 1 p.m." (ii) A conversation at 1:15 p.m. about the economic proposals with Clodius, who stated that the amendment to Section II was approved and explained the German reasons for the instructions given in Tel. No. 256 to Rome [see footnote 5 below]. Hassell urged that he be given instructions on the political questions not later than 5:20 p.m. (iii) A conversation at 5 p.m. with Lorenz, who briefly outlined the instructions in the document here printed; the reason he gave for requesting the omission of the passage on Manchukuo was that it did not appear to belong in the context of the remainder.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 602.

a new factor which would suffice to release the German Government from the offer made in this connexion in their proposals of March 7 and 31<sup>3</sup> last. In such a case too, Germany and Italy would coordinate as far as possible their future attitude towards the League of Nations."

3. Communism: A stylistic alteration of the last passage ["... to combat [Communist propaganda] and to direct their own actions in this sense."']

4. Spain: agreed.

We propose, however, to delete the last sentence and to insert the following:

"The two Governments will jointly examine the question of when, after the *de facto* recognition, the time has come to declare the agreed arms embargo to be invalidated."

5. Manchukuo: We propose deleting this point.

6. On economic questions, [see] separate telegrams Nos. 255<sup>4</sup> and 256<sup>5</sup> of October 14 and 15. As concerns Abyssinia, we attach decisive importance to obtaining precise promises *before* recognition. We do not consider the objection that conditions are unsettled to be tenable in face of the points we have set forth.

7. We recommend a further special section about Austria and propose the following text:

"The Italian Government express their satisfaction over the policy of the normalization of German-Austrian relations inaugurated by the Agreement of July 11 last between Germany and Austria. The Italian and the German Governments are at one in their desire that this policy may continue to prove fruitful in the future."

8. Verbal revision of the German translation of the Italian text is reserved.

NEURATH <sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> See documents Nos. 3 and 242.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 597.

<sup>5</sup> Not printed (7253/E532224-27). This telegram referred to the section on Italo-German economic cooperation in the Danubian region contained in the Italian proposals (document No. 602), and stated that it was desired to omit mention of the five documents cited therein, as Germany did not wish to be bound by the Stresa Agreements, the Rome Protocols and the Italian Memorandum of Sept. 29, 1933, in their entirety. On the other hand, the Italian proposals lacked an essential element contained in the German proposals (document No. 597), under Section III, point (2), namely, that the two Governments would jointly resist all attempts to create new economic organizations in the Danubian region without their participation. Berlin attached decisive importance to this reciprocal promise being more clearly expressed.

<sup>6</sup> In a further, unnumbered, telegram of Oct. 16 (348/201808-09), Weizsäcker informed Hassell that the document here printed had that day been discussed with Attolico, and gave the text of an alternative version for Point 1 (Western Pact) which had been agreed with Attolico and which could be used should Rome share Attolico's view that the German formula was too superficial.

## No. 609

116/66258

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 16, 1936.

RM 747.

I had a thorough discussion with Gauleiter Forster yesterday about Danzig affairs, and in particular I again requested him to conduct any proposed conversations with the Poles in the closest liaison with the Foreign Ministry.<sup>1</sup> Herr Forster promised me that he would do so. Apart from this he informed me that, after the dissolution of the Social Democrat Party in Danzig,<sup>2</sup> he would try to induce the still existing German National [*Deutschnational*] Party and Centre [*Zentrum*] Party, in an amicable fashion, to dissolve themselves. He doubted, however, whether he would succeed in doing so in the case of the Centre Party.

V. N[EURATH]

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<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 605 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 594 and footnote 2 thereto.

## No. 610

141/127019-20

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 16, 1936.

RM 748

[Pol. I 2622].<sup>1</sup>

I asked the Belgian Minister to come and see me today and informed him of the fact of the communication of our reply<sup>2</sup> to the British Memorandum on the Locarno Conference,<sup>3</sup> and of its contents. Count Davignon took the opportunity of asking me whether we had any objections to the attitude of the Belgian Government as expressed in the King's speech of the day before yesterday.<sup>4</sup> I told the Minister that this was certainly not the case. We were, now as previously, prepared to make our declaration of non-aggression even to a neutral Belgium. The Minister then said that it was incomprehensible to him why such excitement had arisen in Paris over the declaration in question. The Belgian Government had for weeks allowed no doubt to

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<sup>1</sup> Taken from another copy (3610/E026951-52).

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 596.

<sup>3</sup> Of Sept. 17; see document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 606.

exist that they intended to adopt this course. They had no intention of withdrawing from the League of Nations or of withdrawing from their other international obligations. On the other hand, they must decline to undertake more extensive obligations the scope of which they themselves could not foresee. Count Davignon spoke in terms of extreme scepticism about the fate of the proposed Locarno Conference. He then asked whether, in the event of the failure of the Conference, we might perhaps conclude a bilateral non-aggression pact with Belgium. I replied that in my opinion there would be no great obstacles to such a treaty. The Minister added that he hoped that on such an occasion German-Belgian relations in general could be brought to a satisfactory solution.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

## No. 611

3405/E013670

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 16, 1936.

RM 749.

Pol. IX 1395.

The American Ambassador called on me this morning. The purpose of his call remained somewhat unclear to me. He muttered something about "Roosevelt's intention of calling a new Peace Conference" and wanted to know what attitude we would adopt towards such a plan. I told him that I would first have to know what peace Mr. Roosevelt wished to conclude at the new conference, i.e., what was really to be discussed at this conference. Mr. Dodd could give no reply to this question.<sup>1</sup> The Ambassador then asked whether we had communicated our reply to the British Memorandum.<sup>2</sup> I considered an answer to this question to be superfluous and evaded it. Finally he also wanted to know what we would be discussing with Signor Ciano. I gave him no answer to this either.

FRHR. V. NEURATH<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Marginal note: "[To] Dir[ektor] Pol. Mr. Dodd spoke to me, too, a few weeks ago, after his return from America, of Roosevelt's intention of coming forward with a major peace pronunciamiento should he be re-elected. Mr. Dodd did not go into details, he mentioned only 'limitation of armaments'. Dieckhoff, Oct. 17." Dieckhoff's memorandum on his conversation with Dodd on Sept. 17 is document No. 544.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> In telegram No. 193 of Oct. 20 (3405/E013671-72), Weizsäcker instructed the Embassy in Washington unobtrusively to find out further details of the intentions of the U.S. Government. See also document No. 626.



## No. 612

7417/E539340-43

*Minister Mackensen to Senior Counsellor Clodius*

P46

BUDAPEST, October 16, 1936.

Received October 22.

W III SE 4549.

DEAR HERR CLODIUS: With reference to our telephone conversation today<sup>1</sup> I would like to confirm to you once again that Herr Ulrich was with me on the morning of October 14 and that when he handed me your despatch W III SE 4193, of October 9,<sup>2</sup> he explained what his plans here were. In accordance with the despatch and his own wish, I introduced him to the Director of the Futura,<sup>3</sup> M. de Darányi (the present Minister President's cousin). He had an opportunity of expounding his plans in detail to M. de Darányi. Thereupon M. de Darányi promptly stressed that Hungary could only supply grain against foreign exchange or against raw materials equivalent to foreign exchange. Herr Ulrich thereupon indicated that neither of these alternatives was possible and if, for example, M. de Darányi were to point to the wool supplies which we took from South Africa, these supplies were not nearly sufficient to cover Germany's own requirements. It would therefore only be possible for Hungary to supply grain to Germany if other means of financing this were found. In discussing the idea of financing these deliveries by means of the shares held in the local railways, M. de Darányi pointed out that this would meet with the utmost resistance from the National Bank, which, for reasons of foreign exchange policy, would probably oppose the sale of grain against the annual payments being made on these shares, even if a strong Hungarian interest in the nationalization of the local railways were to exist and be acknowledged.

Herr Ulrich has asked me, by reason of this discussion, now to approach the President of the National Bank, M. de Imrédy, to try to influence him in the direction of our wishes and if possible to induce

<sup>1</sup> No record of this conversation has been found.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7417/E539338-39); this informed Mackensen that Senior Counsellor (rtd.) Ulrich was to negotiate in Budapest as representative of four German banks holding shares in the Centrale Bank voor Spoorwegen (C.B.S.), who in turn owned the share capital of eleven Hungarian local railways and to whom the Hungarian Government had undertaken to make a series of annual payments. In recent German-Hungarian discussions it had been suggested that these German owned shares in the C.B.S. might be used as compensation for additional supplies of Hungarian grain to Germany, since these last could not be financed through the German-Hungarian clearing system where a large surplus in favour of Hungary had already accumulated, and since Germany was unable to supply the raw materials which the Hungarians required. Mackensen was instructed to afford Ulrich all possible support.

<sup>3</sup> The Hungarian monopoly organization for the sale of grain.

him to withdraw his opposition. I would have complied with Herr Ulrich's request without more ado had I only had your instructions under reference directing me to afford Herr Ulrich all possible support, in an appropriate manner, in his negotiations. That I should none the less have, for the present, refrained from making an approach to M. de Imrédy and have not yet got in touch with him, is—as I have already explained over the telephone—because meantime (in fact on October 10) there has taken place here a conversation between Colonel General Göring and the new Minister President, M. de Darányi, which likewise dealt with the subject of supplies of foodstuffs (including grain) to us, and envisaged payment indirectly by means of deliveries of armaments. As Colonel General Göring had acquainted me in confidence of this conversation before he left, I immediately reported upon it to Berlin. As I have already said over the telephone, this report (as only now transpires) was unfortunately not sent by the last courier in consequence of the unusually heavy work which the death of M. de Gömbös, and the Cabinet reshuffle, etc., imposed on our office. I now enclose it,<sup>4</sup> together with carbon copies, for your information. I am able to add to this report that Minister Sztójay, when he called on me the day before yesterday, spoke about the Göring-Darányi conversation and mentioned that His Excellency M. de Darányi had promised to give him the review for which Colonel General Göring had asked and had instructed him that upon receiving it he should forthwith convey it to Colonel General Göring.

Should I, before I leave, not receive your promised instructions by telephone or only receive them too late to be able personally to call on M. Imrédy, the conversation with him can easily be conducted by my deputy Herr Werkmeister, who is already personally sufficiently well acquainted with the President of the National Bank.<sup>5</sup>

With cordial greetings and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

MACKENSEN

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<sup>4</sup> See document No. 589.

<sup>5</sup> Marginal note: "H[err] Kalisch. Immediate. Please write to Herr v. Mackensen that he should forthwith speak to Darányi about Göring's conversation and suggest that the Hungarian Government Committee for [the meeting on] Nov. 10 should receive in advance the requisite instructions for giving effect to the Göring-Darányi conversation. R[itter], Oct. 24." This was done in a despatch dated Oct. 29 and signed by Ritter (7417/E539345-47). For further details of these negotiations see vol. VI of this Series.

## No. 613

7253/E532240-42

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 204 of October 17

ROME, October 17, 1936—11:00 p.m.

Received October 18—3:10 a.m.

W III SE 4436.

The results of today's discussions<sup>1</sup> with Buti, and then with Ciano, are as follows:

The Italians agree to the short German formula about the Western Pact, likewise to the German version about the League of Nations. They let it be seen, however, that they regarded it as weakening the attitude to be adopted by Germany in the event of Italy's withdrawal from the League of Nations, but they said that they believed they could depend upon Germany not placing a restrictive interpretation upon this passage. (In this connexion I would venture to refer to the statements I made on the Führer's instructions to Mussolini; see my telegram No. 189 of October 5,<sup>2</sup> paragraph 1). They agreed with the wording on Communism; likewise on Spain. Buti said that he could discover no German or Italian interest in the formula about the arms embargo. I replied that this could be discussed in Berlin. The passage concerning general economic policy was accepted. After the Departments and Buti had at first demanded the omission of the words "currency policy", Ciano said he was prepared to accept the German formula, if "financial" were substituted for "currency policy"; I thought I might agree to this. The German drafting on colonial and raw materials problems was accepted, but with the addition of the word "diplomatically" before the word "support". With regard to economic policy in the Danubian region, the Italians thought that we must either go into great detail, which would hardly be possible at this juncture, or limit ourselves to general statements. For this reason they wished at first to have a single phrase, to read: "The German Government and the Italian Government will keep each other currently informed concerning the basic principles governing their commercial policies in the Danubian region."

<sup>1</sup> In telegram No. 202 of Oct. 16 (7253/E532238-39) Hassell reported that he had that day, as instructed by telegram and telephone, informed Ciano of the German views on the two communiqués and internal protocol (see documents Nos. 597 and 608); Ciano, whilst generally in agreement, had objected to some of the proposals in document No. 597, for Section IV, Point (1), of which he wished to substitute a formula drafted by his own advisers. A further discussion (reported in the document here printed) had been arranged for Oct. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 572.



[“] Whilst both Governments recognize the value of such cooperation, they reserve the right to cause its modalities and all its limits<sup>3</sup> to be studied and laid down by the relevant technical bodies.” When I insisted to Ciano that at any rate we ought to include the subject of defence against [the formation of] politico-economic blocs, he said he was prepared to add to the above phrase the passage we had suggested about rejecting blocs, with minor modifications at the beginning; the paragraph would then read: “The two Governments confirm their attitude of antagonism, in future too, towards all endeavours to set up in the Danubian region, without the simultaneous participation of Germany and Italy, new economic organizations such as, for example, in the nature of an economic integration [*Zusammenschluss*] of the Little Entente or in the sense of the Tardieu Plan.”

Ciano said he agreed to passage No. 7 on Austria (your telegram No. 258).<sup>4</sup>

The main difficulty lay in the German proposals concerning Abyssinia. The Italians resisted the attempt to settle the whole problem of German economic relations with the [Italian] colonies in the shortest possible time and on new principles. At the instigation of the Economic Department and of the Ministry for the Colonies, Buti suggested, instead of V. (1). [*sic*],<sup>5</sup> a completely vague formula, which I rejected just as I had rejected as unacceptable (in the sense of my telephone conversation with Ritter)<sup>6</sup> the formula communicated yesterday.

As regards Points (2) and (3), Buti expressed many objections and he rejected Point (4) as unacceptable. After I had once more explained the great importance of the matter, Ciano said that he was prepared to work out by tomorrow a formula for Point (1) which would really meet us in the matter, but he has just telephoned me to say that, in order to obviate all difficulties, he was ready to accept Point (1) in principle, but naturally with the reservation that the details should be dealt with in accordance with Point (5). I specially thanked Ciano for this speedy decision.

He [Ciano] accepted No. (2) without alteration and No. (3) likewise, with the addition of: “legally valid (*giuridicamente valide*) concessions acquired before October 3, 1935”.<sup>7</sup>

Ciano declared that he was unable to accept No. (4) on paper, but he told me personally that he would give sympathetic consideration to any cases within the meaning of Point (4) which came before him.

<sup>3</sup> The Rome draft (M297/M012702-05) here reads: “its modalities and limits”.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 608.

<sup>5</sup> The Rome draft (M297/M012702-05) reads “IV 1”, i.e., of document No. 597.

<sup>6</sup> This formula was reported in telegram No. 202 (see footnote 1 above); no record of a telephone conversation with Ritter has been found.

<sup>7</sup> In telegram No. 207 of Oct. 19 (348/201817) Hassell reported “Italians agree to addition on possible concessions granted in Abyssinia after Oct. 3, 1935. I have informed Ciano of German view on deleted Point (4).” See document No. 624.



No. (5), in view of the dropping of Point (4), is to be made to read: "As regards the above-mentioned Points . . ." (instead of: "As regards [Points] (1) to (4) . . .").

In reply to Ciano's questions I confirmed that I, too, now regarded the questions of the communiqués and the protocol as settled.

HASSELL

## No. 614

1941/434773-86

### *The Minister in Czechoslovakia to the Foreign Ministry*

A. III 1 allg.

PRAGUE, October 17, 1936.

Received October 19.

Pol. IV 3783.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Beneš.

Last week, as you are aware from my telegraphic reports, I requested a private audience of the President of the State, Beneš, with a view to obtaining a pardon for Dr. Uplegger, who has been sentenced to one year's hard labour, and to obtaining Beneš's cooperation in dealing by stages with the other persons under arrest, both of which requests he granted in a conciliatory manner.<sup>1</sup> On this occasion the President of the State expressed the desire to see me again soon in order to discuss political matters with me. Shortly afterwards he sent me an invitation to tea for yesterday afternoon. The conversation was between ourselves alone and lasted for several hours; it consisted chiefly in the State President's making very detailed statements, whilst I was able mainly to listen without comment.

### *Austria.*

Beneš proceeded from a remark about Austria which he had made to me in the spring.<sup>2</sup> At that time he had put it to me whether at bottom

<sup>1</sup> No previous reports by Eisenlohr on these cases have been found. The reference is to arrests of a number of Sudeten Germans and some Reich Germans on charges of offences against the security of the State. A memorandum by Altenburg (1941/434790-91) of Nov. 13, 1936, recording a conversation between the Deputy Leader of the Auslands-organization, Hencke of the German Legation in Prague, and himself, on the possibilities of German reprisals, refers to the case of the teacher Uplegger whose release it was proposed to await before proceeding to further action. See also vol. VI of this Series, document No. 62.

<sup>2</sup> Presumably a reference to the conversation held on Feb. 21; for Eisenlohr's report on this see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 580.

it would not be the best solution for the German Reich to aim, not at an *Anschluss*, but instead at the restoration of friendly relations with Austria who would then, feeling herself to be part of the German people, follow our political lead in all essential matters. The State President said (though in reality this is perhaps not entirely the case) that Germany's reconciliation with Austria had been and still was regarded as extremely gratifying both by authoritative circles in the Czechoslovak Government and by himself, for this outcome, by contrast to all the artificial constructions which had so far been experimented with in the Austrian problem, represented a solution which was both natural and tenable at least for some years to come. He went into earlier attempts of this kind, mentioned the Italian attempts at the beginning of the twenties to bind Austria economically to Italy, Seipel's visit to Prague, his own advice to Seipel to turn to the League of Nations and the Geneva Protocol on Austria of 1922,<sup>3</sup> and he related how at that time when Austria could obtain credit nowhere, he had diverted from a loan of 1,500,000,000 Czech Crowns which he had obtained for Czechoslovakia in Britain, 500 million Czech Crowns to place at the disposal of Austria in order to safeguard her independence. The Geneva Protocol he had referred to had, he said, also been good business for him, inasmuch as the money he had advanced had been repaid from the League of Nations loan. In general, however, it was true of Austria that every wrong road had apparently first to be pursued to its end before last of all the right road was found. As such a wrong road Beneš also named the so-called Tardieu plan,<sup>4</sup> although he admitted that at the French and British desire he had himself collaborated over this plan.

*Beneš's views on the organization of the Danubian region.*

Beneš then elaborated his own conception of a desirable organization of the Danubian region. In doing so he stressed that he regarded any artificial conjuring up of the shadow of the old Danubian monarchy (which was no longer suited to present-day conditions), even if this were attempted only in the economic sphere, as doomed in advance to miscarry. This occasioned him to point out that, in his view, the Austrian question, were this problem to be wrongly handled, must be seen as containing the sole risk of a European war being unleashed. He said his conception was that, alongside an Austria independent

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<sup>3</sup> Of Oct. 4, 1922, whereby in return for an undertaking not to alienate her independence Austria received an international loan under the auspices of the League of Nations (see League of Nations: *Treaty Series*, vol. xii, pp. 385-411). Mgr. Seipel was at that time the Austrian Federal Chancellor, and visited various countries including Czechoslovakia, in the summer of 1922.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 523, footnote 15.

but closely bound up with Germany, and alongside Hungary, the Little Entente must maintain itself as an independent factor, without dependence on any Great Powers, and must expand its relations, both economic and political, with its neighbours.

*Hodža's economic plans for the Danubian region and the Little Entente.*

I pointed out in this connexion that Germany had always been ready to cooperate economically in the Danubian region but that it appeared to me that the difference between the German attitude and that of, for instance, the Minister President, Hodža, lay in the fact that M. Hodža wished even economic negotiations to be conducted by the Little Entente as a whole and not separately by its individual members, whilst we were obliged to take the contrary view if only because economic conditions were completely different in each one of the member countries of the Little Entente. Beneš did not contravert this, but underlined the variety of economic conditions within the Little Entente by the remark that, despite all endeavours, the Economic Centre of the Little Entente<sup>5</sup> shortly to be set up in Prague would, after all, merely be a clearing centre, since it was precisely the disparity in the conditions prevailing which precluded the possibility of a common economic organization of a more far-reaching nature.

*Hungary.*

As far as Hungary was concerned, Beneš continued, he had already told Count Apponyi<sup>6</sup> years ago that he fully understood Hungary's revisionist desires but that he was not in a position to satisfy them. In these circumstances there remained at the moment nothing else for the two countries to do but to try and make their relationship as neighbours as tolerable as possible. Apponyi had, at the time, agreed that basically he was right.

*Hungarian-Austrian-Czechoslovak combination.*

M. Beneš pointed out with particular emphasis that a plan was being propagated by very influential people in the Western European countries, designed to solve the Danubian problem by means of a close combination between Austria, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. This plan was, he said, naturally very popular in Italy, since it would mean the end of the Little Entente, and the idea had attracted many supporters in Hungary too.<sup>7</sup> He was himself absolutely opposed to it, not

<sup>5</sup> On Sept. 12, 1936, Hodža announced that an economic organization was to be set up in Prague with the object of benefiting the export trade of all three Little Entente countries.

<sup>6</sup> Count Albert Apponyi (1846-1933), leader of the Hungarian delegation at Trianon and subsequently Hungarian Delegate to the League of Nations.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: " ? "

only because the Habsburg shadow would once again fall across any such combination but also because he would remain true in all circumstances to his own creation, namely, the Little Entente. In this connexion he mentioned that rumours, alleging that his attitude to the Habsburg question might change, were completely without foundation.

### *Russia.*

As far as Russia was concerned, he intended to conduct a long-term joint policy with Rumania, and he had, therefore, always made Czechoslovakia's relations with Russia dependent on Rumania's relations with her powerful neighbour.<sup>8</sup> In consequence, he had only drawn closer to Russia when Rumania no longer needed to have any fears of Russia, and similarly he would de-intensify Czechoslovakia's relations with Russia again were Rumania's relations with Russia to deteriorate. Czechoslovakia's relations with Russia were wrongly assessed in Germany. When I rehearsed the familiar reasons why we considered the Franco-Russian and Czechoslovak-Russian Pacts of Mutual Assistance to be so particularly dangerous and to constitute a threat to us, M. Beneš said that Czechoslovakia would never commit the folly of permitting herself to be used by another country as the instrument of a policy directed against Germany. In this respect, and indeed generally with regard to internal conditions and to political thought and sentiment in Czechoslovakia, totally wrong ideas were current in Germany.

### *No military agreements with any country. Condemnation of preventive wars.*

He had, he said, made no military agreements with France and none with Russia or any other country and he would never do so. In particular he would never assist in conducting a preventive war against anyone at all, for such a war would in all circumstances be a crime and a blunder. Nor had the idea of waging a preventive war against Germany ever been expressed by him to French circles either political or military; though admittedly he was aware that such ideas had come to the fore in other countries.

### *Reich Minister Goebbels's speech.*

Whilst on this subject, M. Beneš came to speak, courteously but with visible annoyance, of Reich Minister Goebbels's speech at the Nuremberg Party Rally; he described what the speech had contained about Czechoslovakia as completely unfounded.<sup>9</sup> He said that no matter what

<sup>8</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: " ? "

<sup>9</sup> See also documents Nos. 550 and 587.



reports might have been received by German governmental authorities about Russian-Czech preparations for war, these reports were untrue. Moreover, he himself possessed pretty detailed reports about certain agreements between Germany and Hungary, as well as about the seconding of officers and about the deliveries of aircraft, but neither he nor any of his Ministers had ever said a word about this in public. M. Beneš thereupon asked with some bitterness whether Reich Minister Goebbels's speech was supposed to represent a reply to his own speech in Liberec (on the subject of the Liberec speech, see our despatch A III 2 of August 20<sup>10</sup> last). He had deliberately gone to Liberec at the time, in order in a public pronouncement to discredit the talk in French newspapers about Germany's intending to invade Czechoslovakia.

*Beneš's Liberec speech of August 19 last.*

In any case, his speech had been addressed not only to the German Reich and the Sudeten German minority but also, in the first place, to his Czech compatriots. It had after all required some courage to speak about the minorities problem in the way he had done. But, in this respect too, it was already possible to note a considerable advance in public opinion in Czechoslovakia. Only three years ago even Masaryk, the founder of the State, for all the special authority which he enjoyed, would not have been able to speak in such terms. Moreover, relations between his country and the German Reich could only improve if there were a certain modicum of trust on either side. He himself had this modicum of trust and this is what he had wished to say in Liberec.

*The German minority.*

I replied to this that the best way of inspiring us with trust would be to bring contentedness to the German minority in this country, so that their complaints were not constantly resounding in Germany. Beneš said that it was never possible to content a minority completely. It was in the nature of a minority to be always complaining and striving for more, but at all events he himself, unconcerned at any political trends there might be within his own country, would constantly strive to improve the position of the Sudeten Germans. He must, however, be given a certain amount of time in which to do this and it must be borne in mind that the great political revolution in this country had happened less than twenty years ago, so that a certain misuse of newly acquired power had been inevitable, and that, after such a reversal of all previous circumstances, it was at first only possible gradually to diminish chauvinism and bring about a just equilibrium. I pointed out in this connexion that the German minority felt the foundations of its

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<sup>10</sup> See document No. 587, footnote 2.

existence to be threatened by the forward thrust of the Czech community in all spheres of economic, political and cultural life, and that from these feelings there had arisen, amongst the Sudeten Germans, the idea of irredentism as a last hope, and, conversely, among the Czechs, the fear of an irredentist movement among the Sudeten Germans developing into a new factor endangering peace within the State. If, I said, he wished to prevent this he must inspire trust among the Germans not merely by benevolent phrases but by actual help and by sympathetic contact with them.

*Gradual dispelling of mistrust.*

To the question as to how the atmosphere of mistrust at present prevailing between Germany and Czechoslovakia could be gradually dispelled, I replied that I greatly appreciated the conciliatory attitude adopted by the Czechoslovak Government over the familiar question of granting their own nationality to the Czechoslovak subjects who had emigrated to us, and also the readiness to reach an understanding shown by his Government over the question of the revision of the Elbe agreements.<sup>11</sup> It appeared to me that it would be very useful for the gradual *détente* to which we aspired if we were to receive further confirmation of such understanding of our needs in future cases too. Furthermore, I would shortly be submitting to his Government the proposal for proceeding with the Oder-Danube canal; this would, in the first place, merely be a matter of consultation between the technical committees of either side. I asked him to agree and to promote this project, whose execution would represent a joint effort by the two countries towards the realization of a great undertaking. Beneš agreed at once and then said that, for his part, he had twice vainly attempted to achieve a joint settlement concerning the right of asylum.<sup>12</sup> In making that proposal he had wished to prove to us that he did not support the anti-German activities of the political *émigrés*. I asked him what he had required by way of a counter concession. Were he to require us to withdraw our protection from the Sudeten Germans who had come to us, we should never be able to consider this, if only on grounds of sentiment. M. Beneš said that this question could be settled in such a way that we too would be content, but described the

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<sup>11</sup> As the result of negotiations between Germany and Czechoslovakia concerning a revision of the Statute of the Elbe (one of the rivers which had been placed under an international régime by Part XII of the Treaty of Versailles), a provisional agreement was drawn up (7361/E538371-91; 401-07) and was initialled on Oct. 5, 1936, by plenipotentiaries of the Powers represented on the International Commission of the Elbe (Germany, Belgium, Great Britain, France, Italy and Czechoslovakia); signature was to take place on Nov. 24, 1936. See also vol. VI of this Series, document No. 18 and footnotes thereto.

<sup>12</sup> See vol. III of this Series, documents Nos. 511 and 523 and vol. IV, document No. 128.

matter as one of no great importance. On the other hand, an arrangement would appear to him to be useful in order to dispose of at least the worst of the extravagances in the press comment of either side; and, furthermore, we should continue in our efforts to settle the cases of arrests on both sides, and he also thought that the best means of restoring mutual understanding would be to keep in touch and periodically to engage in a frank exchange of views on current problems.

*Beneš would like a German guarantee.*

M. Beneš thereupon, cautiously feeling his way, wished to bring the conversation round to the question of the Locarno negotiations, mentioning that he would much like to obtain a guarantee from Germany.<sup>13</sup> I purposely did not ask whether he meant by this a bilateral pact of non-aggression, a general guarantee of frontiers or a collective treaty of some kind, since by now so much time had elapsed that our conversation had to be broken off before delicate topical questions could be explored.

*Conclusion.*

Of Beneš's statements as set forth above, his remark that a recurrence of tension between Rumania and Russia would of necessity lead to a cooling-off of Czechoslovak-Russian relations, appears to me worthy of note. Perhaps this remark affords an opportunity which could be exploited, for instance in case of Rumania drawing closer to Poland again. Furthermore, I was struck by the emphasis with which Beneš spoke about the plan for a combination: Austria-Czechoslovakia-Hungary. He appears to see in this a parallelism of his interests with ours to which he wished to draw attention. Moreover, Beneš frankly told me in the course of this conversation that in the present state of affairs in Europe all the factors of political calculation had become uncertain and that he was therefore obliged to base his policy primarily on the strength of his own country and on that of the Little Entente. He acknowledges that the question of the German minority is vital for Czechoslovakia and that the same applies to relations between Czechoslovakia and the German Reich. He would like to bring about a political *détente* with us and to obtain from us some kind of reinsurance (a "guarantee")<sup>14</sup> which would then have a favourable effect on the minorities question, whilst we should place the main emphasis on a satisfactory solution of the minorities question, as one of the preconditions for improved relations (though indeed this would hardly be likely ever to be realized). It seemed clear, however, that Beneš no

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<sup>13</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "!"

<sup>14</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "Result of the occupation and fortification of the Rhineland."



longer regards either the alliances with France and Russia or his membership of the League of Nations (of which on this occasion he made no mention at all) as secure bases for the preservation of his country's independence. There was, however, no suggestion whatever of any fundamental change in his previous policy.<sup>15</sup> He clearly intends to await the course of events and to keep the door open where we are concerned by maintaining a markedly conciliatory attitude. He has, however, probably come to realize that his earlier attempts to pocket the profits of an alliance policy directed against us and to avoid the possible risks entailed by this policy by means of a German-Czechoslovak *détente*—"to have his cake and eat it"—have become more unpromising than ever.

EISENLOHR

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<sup>15</sup> Marginal note in Neurath's handwriting: "He caused Mastný to say this here."

## No. 615

2092/452535-40

*Memorandum by the Head of Economic Policy Division IV*

SECRET

BERLIN, October 19, 1936.

I had a conversation of some length with Herr Herbert Göring<sup>1</sup> today about German-Russian economic questions. Herr Herbert Göring informed me of his views on the subject as follows:

1. It was recognized in authoritative quarters that the raw materials situation and the progress of German rearmament were such as to make us dependent on procuring Russian raw materials. It was therefore necessary to get German-Russian economic relations out of their present deadlock.<sup>2</sup> The precondition for this was that business with Russia should be rendered completely non-political. This was the task which Colonel General Göring had assigned to him. The purpose of this assignment was to centralize German-Russian economic questions in his hands, in order to avoid the Russians' approaching every possible authority, as they have done hitherto, and then playing them off one against the other. Colonel General Göring had stated that he was prepared, *ad hoc*, to bring about decisions very rapidly on every question submitted to him, especially in the sphere of armaments deliveries. Colonel General Göring proposed to receive Kandelaki and Friedrichson personally as soon as Kandelaki should have returned from Moscow next week. Kandelaki had already been informed of

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<sup>1</sup> See also documents Nos. 341, 347 and 591.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 535.



this and had been asked to bring back from Moscow a concrete programme for deliveries and orders.

2. With regard to his efforts so far, Herr Herbert Göring told me that he had succeeded in clarifying in a positive sense the question of supplying armoured plates and aircraft catapults. The Russians had already been informed of this. The position with regard to underwater listening apparatus also appeared favourable. The question of supplying warships seemed to him to be doubtful. The Russians desired deliveries of warships to a value of 200 million Reichsmark. Colonel General Göring was favourably disposed towards this question, but it was doubtful whether his view would prevail. Of the supplies in return which he, Herbert Göring, had requested from the Russians, the most important were manganese ores, which were our most urgent requirement.

3. Herbert Göring envisages that further procedure *vis-à-vis* the Russians will be that he himself will further conduct the necessary discussions with Kandelaki and Friedrichson about deliveries to the Soviet Union and about our procurement of raw materials. Should decisions have to be made which exceeded the instructions he had so far received, he would report to Colonel General Göring and [Reichsbank] President Schacht. In order that industry should play a larger part, it would, he said, be necessary to induce the Russia Committee of German Industry<sup>3</sup> to be more active, and to familiarize industry with the notion of rendering German-Russian economic relations non-political. It must be pointed out to German industry that deliveries to Russia were now more than ever in the interests of German national policy, since this was the only way in which we could obtain the necessary raw materials by compensation methods. In about ten days' time, after the discussion between Colonel General Göring and Kandelaki, he proposed to assemble the leaders of the Russia Committee and set forth these considerations to them.

4. Herr Herbert Göring had not yet formed any conclusions about the form German-Russian economic relations ought to take in future, particularly in respect of the question of the extension of the present Treaty<sup>4</sup> to the year 1937. He had in mind a purely compensation trading; German deliveries of industrial products, with the application of the procedure for the promotion of additional exports [*Zusatzausfuhrförderungsvorgahrens*],<sup>5</sup> against Russian deliveries of raw materials on the basis of world prices.

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<sup>3</sup> For the functions of the Russia Committee of German Industry, which was affiliated to the Reich Federation of German Industry, see vol. iv of this Series, document No. 21, footnote 9.

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 302.

<sup>5</sup> For this procedure, which entailed granting a subsidy on certain exports, see vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 22, 157, and 174.

5. I replied to Herr Herbert Göring as follows:

It was very much to be welcomed that economic questions relating to Russia were to be more strictly concentrated in his hands. Only a person who had been authorized to do so by the highest political authorities could speak about the question of deliveries to Russia, which was an absolutely decisive one. But I thought that two very important matters were missing in his description. Although by these means the industrial sector would be powerfully assisted, yet the agricultural sector would not be receiving its due, and the decisive question as to how we should shape our contractual relations with the Soviet Union for the year 1937, would, if, as hitherto, he were to concern himself with the Russian questions alone, nevertheless still have to be dealt with through other channels. All three groups of questions, the industrial sector, the agrarian sector and the framing of treaties, were, however, so interconnected that it would hardly be possible to treat them separately. If the centralization referred to, which was very much to be welcomed, were indeed desired, then he could not handle it alone. For reasons of competence and division of labour, he would need at least one representative from each of the departments chiefly concerned. Herr Herbert Göring fully accepted this idea but wished to keep a committee of this kind as small as possible and to keep it restricted to myself as Foreign Ministry representative and to a possible representative of the Ministry of Food. He entirely recognized the necessity for this and intends to submit this idea, on his own initiative, to President Schacht at the earliest opportunity. Until then he intends to continue to keep me currently informed about everything. We were agreed that we must in all circumstances avoid the settlement for 1937 not being completed in good time. As soon as the matter of deliveries to the Soviet Union has been clarified, discussions must be begun on the shaping of our 1937 economic treaty with the Soviet Union.

The following questions of detail were also discussed:

1) *The credit question*

We were agreed that there could be no question of granting a credit to the Russians at present. If, at the present moment, we were to present the Russians with the opportunity of making purchases in Germany against Credit Marks also, they would lose all incentive to supply us with raw materials, since they would then be even less able than they are now to make use of the Export Marks accruing from such deliveries. Moreover, we are at present only concerned to make deliveries to the Soviet Union in order thus to obtain raw materials in compensation.

2) *P[rocedure for the] P[romotion of] A[dditional] E[xports]*

The improved functioning of the procedure for the promotion of

additional exports is a matter of urgent necessity. Herr Herbert Göring regards as justified the complaints by industry about the uncertainty in regard to the relevant export promotion bounty and about the very great delay in the decisions on individual cases. He will make efforts in his own domain to remedy this.

3) *Premature repayment of the Russian credits through deliveries of raw materials*

Not much could be made of this possibility, since the Russians were speculating heavily on a possible depreciation of the Reichsmark and, for this reason, they would certainly not want to repay in advance credits falling due after 1937 by deliveries of raw materials. They were in principle prepared to pay their debts falling due in 1937 by deliveries of raw materials but they were endeavouring to protract the relevant negotiations until the debts had fallen due. In that event, however, the question would no longer be of interest to us.<sup>6</sup>

SCHNURRE

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<sup>6</sup> Marginal note: "H[err] Schnurre, please discuss [with] 1) Foreign Minister, Dieckhoff, etc. 2) Moscow. R[itter], Oct. 21."

## No. 616

1923/431448-50

### *The Minister in the Netherlands to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4323

THE HAGUE, October 19, 1936.

Received October 20.

Pol. II 2365.

Subject: Influence of Princess Juliana's betrothed on feelings in Holland.

In a report on the visit of the Royal Family to Rotterdam,<sup>1</sup> Consul Windecker mentions that Princess Juliana's betrothed, Prince Bernhard zur Lippe,<sup>2</sup> in acknowledging the ovations which he received, waved with his left hand only, which was attributed by many Germans to his wishing most particularly to avoid his gestures of acknowledgement being mistaken for the National Socialist greeting. The report also says Prince Bernhard has never worn in Holland the Party badges and emblems of rank which he was shown to be wearing in an old photograph.

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<sup>1</sup> This was report I P 4 of Oct. 15 from the Consul in Rotterdam (1923/431443-47).

<sup>2</sup> The engagement of Princess Juliana of the Netherlands to Prince Bernhard zur Lippe-Biesterfeld had been announced on Sept. 8, 1936; the marriage took place on Jan. 7, 1937.



In this connexion I should like to say that the wearing in public of Party badges, Dutch as well as foreign, is forbidden in Holland and that, in general, it is hardly customary to acknowledge greetings from foreigners abroad with the German greeting. Whether the Prince zur Lippe belongs or has belonged to a branch of the Party, I do not know. That he, as with increasingly rare exceptions are all Germans, is at least favourably disposed towards National Socialism, I would, however, assume *a priori*. To use this disposition of his to bring about a change of feeling in Holland will, however, need much time and great tact. The Queen, like wide circles of her people, is not very Germanophile and, in particular, is hardly sympathetic towards the new Germany. Thus the late Prince Consort<sup>3</sup> repeatedly told me that the Queen, because of a certain antipathy towards Germany, would prefer it if her daughter were to marry a non-German Prince. That Princess Juliana has, nevertheless, chosen a German bridegroom no doubt represents a factor in our favour, on which, however, it would be wrong to place any great hopes for the near future. The Queen at no time allowed her late husband to exert any influence on government affairs, and it is said that she only informs her daughter in general terms of what is going on in the country. That she should allow herself to be influenced by her son-in-law in the exercise of government appears to me out of the question. Perhaps this situation may change at some later date.

Now that the betrothal has come about there is, however, one person in the Royal Family who can refute any criticisms which may arise and win over opinion personally for the new Germany. Princess Juliana will, just as she has done recently, travel to Germany more often than was hitherto the case, and will thus be able to see for herself that the homeland of her betrothed is today quite different from the Germany she knew of old. Similarly, the friends and relations of the bridegroom will, in all probability, come to Holland frequently and quite automatically bring with them to the Netherlands the ideas current in the new Germany. In time, the betrothal will doubtless contribute to an improvement in Holland's attitude towards Germany, especially as the bridegroom is much more intelligent and more adroit than was his late father-in-law. These favourable prospects would, however, be reversed, if it were expected of the Prince of Lippe that he should act very forcefully at the outset, for example, by trying to insist upon wearing German Party badges in the Netherlands contrary to Dutch regulations.

ZECH

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<sup>3</sup> Heinrich, Duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, born 1876, Prince Consort to Queen Wilhelmina of the Netherlands, 1901-1934.



## No. 617

5950/E437758-62

*The Ambassador in Italy to the Foreign Ministry*

4789

ROME, October 19, 1936.

Received October 21.

Pol. I 2675.

Subject: The Italian Government's reply to the British Memorandum of September 17.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to my telegram No. 205 of October 17.<sup>2</sup>

I venture to enclose the text of the Italian Government's reply to the British Memorandum of September 17, 1936, concerning the Five Power Conference, together with a German translation.

HASSELL

[Enclosure]<sup>3</sup>

## MEMORANDUM

Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

ROME, October 16, 1936—XIV.

The Fascist Government have most carefully examined the suggestions put forward by the British Government, in their Memorandum of September 17 last, in connexion with the diplomatic preparation of the conference of the five Locarno Powers, which it is the common wish of the two Governments to see held as soon as possible.

The Fascist Government have noted with satisfaction that the British Government share their point of view as to the necessity for a precise and thorough diplomatic preparation of the conference and as to the usefulness of the principal questions regarding the character and scope of the agreement which is to replace the Treaty of Locarno being discussed between the five interested Governments prior to the start of the conference. Among such questions, those mentioned by the British Government appear to the Fascist Government to be of essential importance, but, before entering into a detailed examination of them, the Fascist Government are of the opinion that it should be clearly understood between the five Powers who are to take part in the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 546, enclosure.

<sup>2</sup> Not printed (3317/E007797-98); in this telegram Hassell reported that Ciano had that evening given him the text of the document here printed, telling him that it was to be communicated the following day, but had not yet been seen by any other department. Ciano also said that the text of the French reply (document No. 607, enclosure) had that day been received from the French Ambassador.

<sup>3</sup> The enclosure is translated from the Italian text; the German translation is filmed as 5950/E437763-66.

conference what should be the general bases of the new agreement which is to be negotiated between them.

To the Fascist Government it seems that the most practical manner of proceeding to an exchange of ideas on this question would be to take as a starting point for the discussions the Treaty of Locarno itself, as it now is; and, instead of discussing *de novo* all the factors which led to its conclusion, to re-examine in common accord the structure of the Treaty, in order to adapt it to those circumstances which in the meantime have been subjected to change, without, however, altering either its general plan or its essential characteristics.

The Treaty of Locarno—fruit of long diplomatic elaboration—remains one of the most organic and best conceived instruments for the creation in Western Europe of those conditions of security to which our efforts are directed; and in the opinion of the Italian Government the new pact should retain its fundamental principles.

These principles consist in essence of : (a) The specific undertaking of France, Belgium and Germany in no case to have recourse to war between themselves; (b) the joint guarantee by Italy and England of the non-aggression agreements between France, Belgium and Germany which form the basis of the Locarno Treaty.

These two principles are, moreover, those to which the British Government rightly refer in paragraph (1) of their Memorandum.

The question of the guarantee is certainly the one which most specially interests England and Italy, and on this point the Fascist Government think a more precise exchange of ideas necessary.

From an examination of the British Memorandum, the Fascist Government have gathered that it is the intention of the British Government to introduce into the guarantee system a new principle, that is to say, the principle of reciprocity. It seems to emerge from the British Memorandum that the British Government would be disposed to renew the Locarno guarantees, so far as concerns the non-aggression agreements between Germany, France and Belgium, in exchange for similar guarantees in favour of Great Britain on the part of Germany against France and on the part of France against Germany. That which in the communiqué of February 3, 1935,<sup>4</sup> was the principle on which the Air Pact was to be based would thus come to be made the organic basis for the entire system of guarantees in the new treaty.

Such an innovation seems to the Fascist Government to be of the greatest importance, and the Fascist Government would wish to call the attention of the British Government to what would, in their opinion, be its practical consequences.

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<sup>4</sup> The Anglo-French Joint Declaration of Feb. 3, 1935, issued after conversations in London between French and British Ministers, Feb. 1-3, 1935. For the text see British Blue Book, Cmd. 5143 of 1936, No. 5. See also vol. III of this Series, document No. 479.

To begin with, the Fascist Government have always regarded the Locarno guarantee as a joint Italo-British guarantee and have always considered that the real strength of the Locarno Treaty lay in the fact that the aggressor would in every case have found himself faced by the united forces of the Power attacked and of the two guarantors. The joint character of the Italo-British guarantee, and this union of the forces of the guarantors and the Power attacked, constituted the fundamental unity—for all practical purposes—of the Locarno Treaty.

Confronted with the suggestions contained in the British Memorandum, the Fascist Government ask themselves whether this fundamental unity would be effectively maintained in a régime of reciprocal separate guarantees, or whether instead the Treaty of Locarno would not become split into two tripartite systems, which would fundamentally alter the position of the guarantors, do away with the joint character of the guarantee and, for all practical purposes, transform the Locarno Treaty into two separate pacts of mutual assistance: one Franco-Anglo-German and one Italo-Franco-German, only formally linked together in the common framework of a general pact. In the opinion of the Fascist Government, this would represent a general weakening of the Locarno system, which it is certainly not the intention of any of the five Governments to bring about.

It is perhaps unnecessary for the Fascist Government to call the attention of the British Government to the fact that, once the joint character of the Locarno guarantee is weakened, the Treaty of Locarno would come to lose not only one of its fundamental characteristics, but also a function to which an essential importance has always, and rightly, been attributed.

In proceeding to the examination of the other questions alluded to in the British Memorandum, and upon which the Fascist Government reserve the right to make their own position clear, it seems to the Fascist Government to be necessary that the States signatories of the Locarno Treaty should be in agreement as to the character which the new treaty is to have and should settle whether or not it is their intention to reconstruct the Locarno Treaty on its original bases.

[EDITORS' NOTE: Preparations for the conversations with Ciano (see documents Nos. 618, 620, 621 and 622):

On October 19, in telegram No. 206 from Rome (33/25420) Hassell reported:

"With reference to our telegram No. 204 [document No. 613].

The Italians have given me the Italian texts of both communiqués as well as the protocol and have asked for a complete German text, with

which request I am complying under express reservation of the Berlin version being the authentic one. For safety I repeat:

- A. Communiqué about visit to the Führer and recognition, as in the Italian proposal [see document No. 602], approved by us in principle [see document No. 608].
- B. Final, general, communiqué, as in the Italian proposal [see document No. 602].
- C. Protocol
  - I Western Pact, as in the short German proposal [see document No. 608 with footnote 6 thereto].
  - II League of Nations, as in the German proposal [see document No. 608].
  - III Colonies, as in the German proposal [see document No. 597], with the addition of 'diplomatic' [see document No. 613], and my variant relating to raw materials [see document No. 608, footnote 1].
  - IV Communism, as in the Italian proposal [see document No. 602] with the German amendment [see document No. 608].
  - V Spain, as in the Italian proposal [see document No. 602] minus the last sentence [and] with the German addition on the embargo [see document No. 608].
  - VI Danube, first two sentences as in the Italian version [see document No. 602], then German addition *re* the rejection of blocs [see document No. 613].
  - VII Austria, in the German version [see document No. 608].
  - VIII Abyssinia: 1. In the German version [see document No. 597]. 2. Ditto. 3. Ditto with Italian emendation 'legally acquired before October 3, 1935' [see document No. 613]. 4. Deleted. 5. In the German version with slight changes [see *ibid.*].
  - IX General Economic Policy, as in the German proposal [see document No. 597]; in place of 'currency', 'financial' [see document No. 613]."

On the same day Lorenz submitted to Weizsäcker a preliminary draft for the internal protocol and an explanatory memorandum (33/25413-19), which last reads as follows:

"On the individual points of the draft the following may be observed:

"In the introduction the Italian phrase '*azione comune*' is translated as 'their joint action'. In his telegram [No.] 199 of October 14 [document No. 602] Herr v. Hassel [*sic*] used the phrase 'jointly [to direct] their action'.

"On point (4) (Spain) Minister Buti stated that he could discover no German or Italian interest in the inclusion of the sentence concerning the arms embargo proposed by us. To this Herr v. Hassel replied that this could be discussed in Berlin.



"In point (8) (Danubian region) the shortened and amended Italian proposal has been inserted in the draft. What the Italians mean by the word 'limits' will have to be ascertained when the Italian draft has been submitted. ('Delimitation'?)

"In point (9) (Abyssinia) 'in principle' has been inserted in paragraph 1 and the words 'legally [acquired] before October 3, 1935' in paragraph 3 in accordance with Herr von Hassel's telegram No. 204 of October 17 [document No. 613]. Were this date to be adopted the most recent major concession acquired by Schmidt would not be covered. This dates from November 1935. Its validity in law is doubtful on account of the non-delivery of consignments of arms. The further paragraph, proposed by us, concerning an Italian obligation to pay compensation has for the moment been entirely omitted from the draft, as Count Ciano stated that he could not accept this on paper. He merely declared personally that he would give sympathetic consideration in the sense of our proposal to cases which came before him. One wonders whether he might not confirm this in writing after all if we were to point out how small a sum the total of German compensation claims is likely to amount to and if we were to find a formula which would not prejudice his position in relation to other Governments. It should be observed that the Italian Government are not in general accommodating towards their own nationals in compensation questions. Perhaps they will compensate Italians who have suffered loss in Abyssinia by other means, e.g. by grants of land, concessions etc.

"In the Italian version of the protocol the Italian Government would have to be put in first place in each case.

"I should be grateful for instructions as to whether special memoranda on any points are required for the oral discussions and, if so, which."

This draft, with emendations by Weizsäcker, is headed: "Draft for the Internal Protocol: Confidential. Also within the Departments" (33/25452-57). A circular of October 20, addressed to "officials participating in the conversations with the Italian Foreign Minister Count Ciano and his suite", states that both the contents of the internal protocol and the fact of its existence should be treated as strictly confidential and should not be mentioned to any persons not directly concerned.

In addition to the draft for the internal protocol, a memorandum of October 20 listing further points for the conversations (33/25463-67) proposes that the questions of (1) Memel and (2) Danubian Navigation and the Danube Commission should be raised with Ciano, and attaches memoranda on both topics.]

## No. 618

348/201818-26

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 21, 1936.

RM 755.

When he called on me this morning, Count Ciano, the Italian Foreign Minister, began by expressing his satisfaction over the fact that his first visit abroad as [Foreign] Minister should have taken him to Berlin. He emphasized that it would be his endeavour to promote cooperation between Germany and Italy in every respect and that he therefore wished to speak quite frankly during the impending conversations. In order to be able to do so unhindered, he requested that the conversation between him and myself should be *tête-à-tête*. At my suggestion, we then so conducted our conversation as to work through the draft for the internal protocol<sup>1</sup> point by point.

I began by asking Count Ciano what his views were with regard to the treatment of the so-called protocol. In our opinion the existence of the protocol should be kept strictly secret, as otherwise we should be questioned from all sides about its contents and, if we refused to give information, then the wildest conclusions would be drawn. Count Ciano agreed with this and said that he had already worked out a draft concerning what portions of our conversation could be imparted to the press and to foreign Governments. I suggested that we should discuss this point tomorrow morning<sup>2</sup> and that we, too, should put forward a proposal on this subject. While we were discussing this subject, the question also arose as to whether it would not be desirable to choose some title other than "Protocol"—possibly "Memorandum on the Conversations" or something of the kind.

We then began to go through the individual points.

*Re Point 1:*

With regard to Italy's attitude towards the Western Pact, Count Ciano referred to the Italian Government's reply<sup>3</sup>, which had meanwhile been communicated, to the British Memorandum. He emphasized, in

<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1122.

<sup>2</sup> In memorandum RM 759 of Oct. 22 (33/25493-94), Neurath recorded a conversation held that day with Ciano on this subject, during which Ciano had read him a draft of his proposed statement to German and Italian press representatives in Munich, which covered all the points which Neurath had also considered suitable for publication. For the text of Ciano's press statement, made on Oct. 25, see *Documents of International Affairs, 1936*, pp. 341-343.

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 617, enclosure; for the British Memorandum of Sept. 17, see document No. 546, enclosure.

particular, that Italy would never agree to any alteration of the basic concept of the old Locarno Pact. Furthermore, the Italian Government were opposed to any extension of the Western Pact to include the East. Since we, for our part, did not wish to concede to the French any exceptions with regard to non-aggression obligations (which he fully understood), he was very pessimistic regarding the coming into being of a new Western Pact. This led Count Ciano to speak of Anglo-Italian relations. He said:

The Italian Government realized that they would in future have to reckon with a Britain ill-disposed towards Italy. The aim of British policy was so obvious that even a blind man could not fail to see it. Britain's accelerated rearmament was, however, directed in equal measure against Germany. The Italian Government had irrefutable proofs of this. The endeavour of the British Government was to bridge over the period of three years by means of a *modus vivendi* with Italy and Germany and, in the interval, to conclude as many pacts of mutual assistance or similar instruments in the Mediterranean as possible and to tie Germany down, if possible by means of non-aggression pacts with her Eastern neighbours, and then at a given moment to come out openly against Germany and Italy, the two countries which the British Government had described as their most dangerous opponents. As the Italian Government were quite certain that this time would come, they were taking appropriate precautions. These included, apart from the fortifications which were being constructed on the various islands in the Mediterranean, the accelerated training of an efficient fighting force in Abyssinia.

In order to counteract Britain's policy of encirclement in the Mediterranean, Italy was determined not only to liquidate her differences with Yugoslavia, but also to establish as good relations as possible with that country. In comparison with the great interests at stake, Italy's more or less sentimental claims to the Dalmatian coast were of no significance at all, and Mussolini had not the slightest intention of starting a war with Yugoslavia on that account. Since, in Yugoslavia too, there had of late been apparent a tendency to improve relations with Italy, he hoped that it would soon prove possible to bury the hatchet between Yugoslavia and Italy. In this connexion Signor Ciano pointed out that one of the chief opponents of Yugoslavia had been Signor Suvich,<sup>4</sup> who came from Trieste.

In this connexion we also came to speak of Albania. Count Ciano stressed that Albania was by no means an unmixed blessing for Italy, but that, in the nature of things, he had no option but to support King Zog, in order to prevent other forces, hostile to Italy, from becoming active in this little country.

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<sup>4</sup> See also document No. 381 and footnote 2 thereto.



Count Ciano then told me that after Titulescu's departure<sup>5</sup> vigorous attempts at a *rapprochement* had been made by Rumanian quarters, and a desire to join the Rome Protocols had been evinced. Mussolini and he, however, did not think much of the Rumanians, and they therefore, whilst, of course, remaining as friendly as possible with them, did not intend to enter into any commitments. Ciano spoke very disparagingly of M. Beneš, expressing the opinion that in fact the Little Entente now consisted solely of Beneš and that it was at best only being held together by a common fear of Hungary's revisionist plans.

*Point 2. League of Nations:*

Ciano said he could not really add anything on this point. He regarded Italy's activities in the League of Nations, as long as Italy remained officially a member, as resembling those of the Trojan horse. The institution as such was abhorrent to Mussolini and to himself, and nothing would induce him to appear there in person. When I asked him whether Italy would ultimately withdraw, Ciano replied that it was highly probable that this step would be taken. Italy intended first to complete the conquest of Abyssinia. If, when this had been accomplished, the League of Nations continued to tolerate the presence of an Abyssinian representative, then Italy would announce her withdrawal.

*Point 3. The struggle against Communism:*

Ciano had nothing to add on this point either. He merely mentioned in passing that another reason why he had an improvement in relations between Italy and Yugoslavia so much at heart was the fact that Yugoslavia was at the moment one of the strongest bulwarks against Bolshevism in South Eastern Europe.

*Point 4. Spain:*

With regard to the recognition of the Franco Government, we agreed that this should take place immediately after the capture of Madrid and simultaneously [*gleichzeitig*]. Count Ciano again assured me that Italy had no intention whatever of making any territorial claims against the Franco Government, in the event of their victory, for, in view of Spanish pride, a surrender of Spanish territory would at once place the new Government in an impossible position. Count Ciano also uttered a warning against voicing any wishes concerning the cession of Spanish colonies in recompense for the support given to the Franco Government. I told him that we had no intention of making any such demands for we, like himself, were convinced that to meet any such demands would be tantamount to a death-blow for the new Government.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Titulescu had been replaced as Rumanian Foreign Minister by Victor Antonescu; see document No. 528 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>6</sup> Neurath's memorandum RM 764 of Oct. 23 on further conversation with Ciano concerning Spain is printed as document No. 106 in vol. III of Series D.



*Point 5. The German-Austrian Agreement:*

Count Ciano expressed satisfaction over the fact that this agreement had so far worked so well. As for Prince Starhemberg, he had formerly been supported by Italy, but Mussolini had now written him off and had advised him to occupy his time with something other than politics. He, Ciano, was glad that the Austrian question was no longer a strain on relations between Germany and Italy, and he hoped that this would continue to be the case. I took the opportunity of mentioning the undesirable presence of Signor Moreale [*sic*]<sup>7</sup> in Vienna. Count Ciano promised that he would remove him from Vienna within two or three months. As Moreale, apart from his work as the representative of the Italian official newspaper, also held a number of posts within the Fascist Party in Vienna, he would have to be got out gradually, particularly since over a considerable period he had served the Italian Government well.

Following this, Ciano said that the Italian Minister, Salata,<sup>8</sup> had reported that Herr von Papen had stated in Vienna that the German Government intended to raise the German Legation in Vienna to the status of an Embassy. In this connexion he had put up three possible alternatives for discussion, either the simultaneous raising of the status of the Austrian Legation in Berlin to that of an Embassy, or the unilateral raising of the German Legation in Vienna to the status of an Embassy and leaving the Austrian Legation in Berlin as it was, or, finally, the granting of Ambassadorial status only to him personally. In reply to my question as to what Italy would do if the German Legation in Vienna were raised to the status of an Embassy, Count Ciano replied that in that case Italy would, of course, have to follow the German example. Both Mussolini and he, however, were against such a change.

*Point 6. Agreement before participation in international conferences on economic and financial questions:*

Count Ciano had nothing to say on this point.

*Point 7. German colonial wishes:*

Count Ciano said on this point that the Italian Government wished to support our wishes in every respect; all he asked was that he should be given timely and precise information on the subject.

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<sup>7</sup> Eugenio Morreale, Head of the Press Bureau in the Italian Legation in Vienna and correspondent of Italian newspapers; see also vol. II of this Series, document No. 263 with footnote II thereto.

<sup>8</sup> Professor Francesco Salata, previously Head of the Italian Cultural Institute in Vienna, had replaced Guido Preziosi as Italian Minister in Austria.

*Point 8. Commercial policy in the Danubian region:*<sup>9</sup>

Count Ciano commented that cooperation in the Danubian region was just as much to be desired in the field of commercial policy as it was in the political sphere. In what manner this was to be accomplished, however, should be discussed in detail and decided upon by the competent German and Italian authorities. He had in mind that an understanding would have to be reached both on a territorial basis and with regard to the categories of goods to be supplied by each side.

*Point 9. Recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia:*

Here I voiced our desire that the question of the compensation of German nationals settled in Abyssinia should also be dealt with in an accommodating manner.<sup>10</sup> To this Count Ciano replied that he would personally guarantee that they were not only [treated] in an accommodating manner, but were compensated in full. He asked that the individual cases should be brought to his personal notice through the agency of Ambassador von Hassell, and said that he would then settle them direct with the Viceroy, Graziani.<sup>11</sup> He was against the inclusion of a relevant clause in the protocol, because he feared that by some mischance something might leak out about it and that then all the other foreign nationals, particularly the Indians, would invoke this precedent. Otherwise, Count Ciano had nothing to say on Point 9.

Count Ciano did not consider necessary the insertion of a paragraph about keeping the protocol secret.<sup>12</sup> He referred to what he had said on the subject at the beginning and furthermore showed me the heading "top secret" on his own copy.

<sup>9</sup> In a minute dated 9 a.m., Oct. 21 (33/25490), Dieckhoff recorded that he had just been informed by State Secretary Körner [of the Prussian Ministry of State] that Göring, having already discussed Danubian economic questions with Ciano in Budapest, wished to participate in the Berlin discussions on this subject. On the same date Ritter minuted (33/25491) that he had spoken to Körner and provided him, in strict confidence, with a copy of the draft protocol. In a further minute (33/25489) that day, Dieckhoff recorded that Göring had telephoned during the morning and asked for an assurance that the passage in the internal protocol relating to Danubian economic questions did not make it incumbent on the German Government to inform the Italian Government of each separate case, such as, e.g., a transaction for deliveries of ore from Yugoslavia. Dieckhoff had expressed the view that the Italians were only to be kept informed of the basic lines of German trade policy in the Danubian region. This view Ritter had subsequently confirmed. In a memorandum of Oct. 20 (33/25459) Ritter recommended that should any statements to the press be agreed upon, the topic of the Danubian region should be included, in order to demonstrate the futility of attempts by third parties to play off Germany and Italy against each other in any economic arrangements there.

<sup>10</sup> In a memorandum to Neurath dated Oct. 20 (33/25445-47) Ritter had advised pressing Ciano for a written statement to be included in the internal protocol.

<sup>11</sup> Marshal Graziani had been appointed Viceroy of Abyssinia on June 11, 1936, consequent upon the resignation of Marshal Badoglio.

<sup>12</sup> A memorandum by Weizsäcker of Oct. 20 (33/25461) proposed the inclusion of a final point in the internal protocol to read as follows: "10. The German and the Royal Italian Governments will treat the foregoing protocol as secret. They will only make use of its contents *vis-à-vis* third parties in agreement with one another."

Finally, we also agreed that negotiations should take place as soon as possible on the conclusion of a so-called cultural agreement between the two Governments.

The conversation was conducted by Count Ciano in a praiseworthy spirit of frankness and cooperativeness.<sup>13</sup>

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>13</sup> For Ciano's record of his conversations with Neurath see *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 87-92 (English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 52-55).

In a memorandum of Oct. 21 (348/201832) Dieckhoff reported that on the following day he and Buti would go through the texts of (1) the Führer communiqué, (2) the general communiqué and (3) the record [internal protocol], in order that, should no material differences of opinion be found to exist, final texts could be prepared and signature take place on Friday, Oct. 23. A marginal note by Neurath against the words "differences of opinion" reads: "These no longer exist."

## No. 619

5749/E415864-66

### *The High Command of the Navy to the Foreign Ministry*

B No. 17016 BB V b

BERLIN, October 21, 1936.

Received October 22.

W VIIIa NA 1260.

Subject: Petroleum concession in Mexico.

Reference: No. W VIIIa NA 1206.<sup>1</sup>

With reference to today's telephone conversation between Vice-Consul Krienen and Oberregierungsrat Dr. Fetzter, a copy of communication B No. 15 413 BB V b of September 26, 1936, to Herr Burandt, the Commercial Attaché at the German Legation in Mexico, is enclosed herewith.

By order:  
DR. FETZER

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<sup>1</sup> This was the number given in the Foreign Ministry to a letter of Oct. 14 from the High Command of the Navy (5749/E415863) requesting that the Legation in Mexico be instructed to discuss negotiations on petroleum with Professor Bentz of the Prussian Geological Institute, who would arrive there on Oct. 26. The Minister in Mexico reported on Professor Bentz's visit and on petroleum concessions in Mexico in his despatch IV B 3 of Oct. 30 (5749/E415893-99), with which he enclosed a copy of Bentz's secret report to Fetzter of Oct. 30 on the possibilities of German participation in the Mexican oilfields (5749/E415900-09).

[Enclosure]

### *The High Command of the Navy to the Commercial Attaché to the Legation in Mexico, at present at the Foreign Ministry*

B No. 15413 BB V b

BERLIN, September 26, 1936.

Subject: Petroleum concession in Mexico.



The conversations which Oberregierungsrat Dr. Fetzner had with you on September 16 in the above-mentioned matter are summarized and confirmed as having been to the following effect:

According to our information there are extensive oil-bearing areas in Mexico for which concessions with a view to their exploitation are still obtainable. It will, however, only be possible to acquire such petroleum concessions in cooperation with the Mexican State oil company, Petromex. It is desired to find out whether the Mexican Government or the management of Petromex would be disposed to found, together with German private persons, a new German-Mexican company for the acquisition and exploitation of petroleum concessions in Mexico. In view of Germany's foreign exchange position, such a company could be established and operated only on one of the two following bases:

(1) The German group shall make no down payment for the acquisition of the concession but shall make available regular deliveries in kind and technical assistance in return for the acquisition of the concession or of the German share in the new company. (As in all industrial spheres, Germany is also well able to compete in the manufacture of boring machinery and to maintain the same standard of efficiency as, for example, the industry of the United States.) Or,

(2) The German group shall make one non-recurrent foreign exchange payment in pounds sterling or USA dollars for the acquisition of the concession, but shall offset its share of current operating costs by regular deliveries in kind.

The aim of these endeavours is to create a source of crude oil for Germany in Mexico, and that in such a way that regular supplies of crude oil or oil partly processed in Mexico may be obtained from the German-Mexican company whilst the equivalent value would then be regularly made good to the German-Mexican company by means of German deliveries in kind in proportion to the quantities of oil provided. In this way the supply of crude oil to Germany would be ensured without payments in foreign exchange.

For reasons explained in the conversation of September 16, regard could only be had to the areas on the Atlantic side of Mexico for the acquisition of such concessions.

All efforts of this kind are being made primarily on behalf of the German Navy; the Navy have already for some years now been conducting negotiations for the acquisition of petroleum concessions abroad; as far as Mexico is concerned, they are already in touch with the Davis-Sinclair Group regarding participation in the oilfields. This group is operating in the Poza-Rica field and in the areas lying south of this and west of Tuxpam. The negotiations with this group are continuing; but efforts should be made preferably to obtain direct participation with the Mexican State group Petromex alone, so that



recourse need only be had to the Davis-Sinclair group if the direct negotiations with Petromex should not be successful.

By order:  
WEISSMÜLLER

No. 620

343/201827-28

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 22, 1936.

RM 760.

In our today's conversation<sup>1</sup> Count Ciano also came to speak of relations with Poland. He said that Italy's relations with Poland had always been good, except for the short sanctions period. The Italian Government proposed to make these relations even closer if possible, with the object of attracting Poland as far as possible to the Central European group of nations.

We touched briefly, too, on the question of Danzig. I told Count Ciano that there was no intention of taking any sort of violent action to reunite Danzig with Germany, but that of course this reunion was a natural necessity, and its realization was only dependent upon the appropriate moment. In the same way I pointed out, as regards the Corridor, that the present unnatural state of affairs could not go on for ever, but that here, too, we wished to wait for the propitious moment and to settle our differences with the Poles as far as possible in a peaceful manner.

When I asked Count Ciano about Italian relations with Turkey, he replied that they were bad. It was true that the Turks, for their part, had recently made attempts to bring about an improvement, but for the moment he himself saw no possibility of this. One of the main obstacles was, he said, Rüşti Aras himself. The fortifications which Italy was energetically constructing in the Dodecanese were not, in point of fact, directed against Turkey, but were ultimately designed as defensive measures against Britain's policy of encirclement.

As regards Greece, relations under the Minister Presidency of Metaxas had improved, after having for a long time been below zero. A lasting improvement was hardly to be expected however, if only in view of Greek aspirations in the Dodecanese.

For the rest, Count Ciano again emphasized today the firm determination of the Italian Government to reach a settlement of Italo-Yugoslav relations, and to this end he asked for Germany's friendly counsel in Belgrade.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

<sup>1</sup> See also document No. 618.

## No. 621

348/201829

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 22, 1936.

RM 761.

In my yesterday's conversation with Count Ciano<sup>1</sup> I also touched upon the question of the recognition of Manchukuo. On this subject Count Ciano spoke as follows: The Italian Government had decided to recognize Manchukuo as an independent State. They were therefore in process of negotiation with the Japanese Government in order to obtain the simultaneous recognition by the Japanese of Italian sovereignty over Abyssinia. The negotiations, he said, were as good as concluded. Both States would set up Consulates in the territories in question. To my question as to whether he did not fear unfavourable repercussions on Italy's relations with China, Ciano replied that, although Italy still had a military mission and officers as air instructors in China, Mussolini had decided to take this step, because in recent years Italy had been very badly treated by China and therefore no longer needed to show consideration towards the Chinese. I told Count Ciano that for the moment we did not wish to proceed to the recognition of Manchukuo, and that it was for this reason that I had requested the removal of the item on this subject from the protocol.<sup>2</sup>

FREIHERR VON NEURATH.

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 618.

<sup>2</sup> See documents Nos. 602 and 608.

## No. 622

115/117991

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 23, 1936.

RM 763.

I have today drawn Count Ciano's attention to the fact that, as regards the Memel question,<sup>1</sup> Italy's attitude has so far been far from friendly towards us. I told him that while we had no intention whatever of resorting to an act of force to reincorporate the Memel Territory which had been unjustly torn from us, we were on the other hand not prepared to tolerate Lithuanian attempts to de-Germanize the territory. To these remarks I added a request that he should instruct

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1122.

the Italian Minister in Kovno<sup>2</sup> to give his support in future to the German line of argument. Count Ciano at once promised me to do so and made a note to that effect.

FREIHERR VON NEURATH

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<sup>2</sup> Francesco Fransoni.

## No. 623

1723/399858-62

### *The Ambassador in Poland to the Foreign Ministry*

P III 1a/10.36.

WARSAW, October 23, 1936.

Received October 26.

Pol. V 4715.

### POLITICAL REPORT

Subject: Conversation with Foreign Minister Beck about German-Polish and Danzig questions.

Today, for the first time since Beck returned from Geneva and Paris,<sup>1</sup> I had the opportunity of having a fairly long conversation with him, which was devoted almost exclusively to German-Polish relations and the Danzig question.

M. Beck first remarked that he had had a conversation of over two hours today with General Rydz-Smigly and to which M. Lipski was called in too. At this conversation German-Polish relations were also subjected to a detailed scrutiny. He was glad to be able to state that General Rydz-Smigly unreservedly recognized the political objectives set up by Marshal Pilsudski and that in the course of the conversation there had been no reason to deviate even in the slightest degree from the old Marshal's guiding principles, which were well-tried and were increasingly proving themselves to be correct. It was very much to be welcomed that M. Lipski too had had an opportunity to hear General Rydz-Smigly's detailed and fundamental exposition, because he had thereby now been put in a position to expound Polish policy in Berlin authoritatively and on the basis of his own knowledge and impressions.

M. Beck then came to speak of the Danzig question, which, he said, was causing him grave concern. In his lengthy and detailed exposition of this problem the questions forming the subject matter of the Geneva mandate<sup>2</sup> at first receded completely into the background. The foreground was instead occupied by the new difficulties which, in M. Beck's

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<sup>1</sup> Beck visited Paris Oct. 14-15.

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 573, footnote 3.

view, had emerged during the last few weeks, indeed, since the conclusion of the Geneva session. As such M. Beck cited certain *faits accomplis* which had been created by economic ordinances and decrees of the Danzig Senate and which represented a serious danger to Polish commercial interests. But above all else, however, M. Beck constantly referred to the speeches made in the last few weeks by Gauleiter Forster and/or President of the Senate Greiser and in which the Polish Government were being attacked in an increasingly clear fashion. The limit had finally been reached by a speech made a day or two ago by Gauleiter Forster.<sup>3</sup> As I hear from another quarter, this was apparently a speech, hitherto not known to me, made by the Gauleiter at a Danzig Party meeting during which, invoking a conversation he had had shortly before with the Führer and Chancellor, he said, allegedly, that not only the League of Nations but Poland too must be driven out of Danzig. One only had to keep quiet and wait; in six months Danzig would be German again.

M. Beck declared that, as the result of such speeches and of the *faits accomplis*, a new situation had arisen. In Danzig they appeared not to be seeing matters clearly but to be deluding themselves with the belief that the League had disinterested itself in Danzig questions. The opposite was in fact the case. There had, on the contrary, been a danger in Geneva that, at the instigation of the Secretariat, all the Danzig questions would be played up in a sensational manner. It was only with difficulty that he had been able to prevent this, and to manage to get the treatment of the Danzig problems placed in the hands of the responsible Minister. Nor ought people to believe that Poland was inclined to let these challenges [*Herausforderungen*] pass. Under no circumstances would Poland tolerate any encroachment on her rights.

M. Beck went on to say that in the present atmosphere there was hardly any point in negotiating about those things which formed the actual subject matter of the Polish mandate. As far as this question itself is concerned, M. Beck does not yet seem to have any very clear objectives. From what he said I again gathered the impression that the removal of the institution of the League Commissioner could either not be attained at all or only on intolerable conditions. But I did again gather from Beck's indications that he considered it possible for the Danzig High Commissioner to be excluded from questions of internal policy, in which connexion he obviously seemed to be thinking of a restriction of the High Commissioner's powers, or of a restriction of the right to petition, or even of a modification of the Statute.

When I asked how he visualized future procedure, M. Beck said that he must first ascertain whether there existed in Danzig a desire for

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<sup>3</sup> Evidently a reference to Forster's speech on Oct. 20; see also document No. 636, footnote 1.



serious negotiations. He would probably cause this to be ascertained in the next few days, presumably by means of communicating a Note. Whether there would then be direct talks with Herr Greiser would depend on the reply by the Danzig Senate to the Note that would be communicated to them. Furthermore, Beck spoke today for the first time in a very derogatory fashion about Herr Greiser and his suitability for his responsible post. This perhaps goes to confirm the rumours that M. Beck hopes, by means of Greiser's resignation, to acquire a favourable starting-point for the report he is to deliver in Geneva.

Furthermore, I had the impression that M. Beck is at present much less concerned with clarifying the questions connected with the execution of his mandate than with managing to safeguard Polish rights by emphasizing the danger to them. This seems to be primarily a matter of certain privileges for Polish trade, but also of a general recognition and confirmation of Polish rights as a whole.

In conclusion M. Beck requested me to convey to the Reich Foreign Minister his view about the seriousness of the situation and to say that he fears reactions on German-Polish relations if it should not prove possible to stop the Danzig unilateral actions [*Sonderaktionen*]. He also asked to be informed in the event of our being able to make suggestions with regard to the choice of a new Commissioner for Danzig.

V. MOLTKE

## No. 624

2871/563579-88

### *German-Italian Protocol*<sup>1</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

BERLIN, October 23, 1936 [XIV].<sup>2</sup>

NOT TO BE PUBLISHED

The German Minister for Foreign Affairs, Freiherr von Neurath, and the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, Count Ciano, have, on October 21 and 22, 1936, in Berlin, in the names of their respective Governments, discussed current political, economic and social problems of major importance and have ascertained that their respective Governments are in agreement on the following points:

(1) The two Governments, in the negotiations for a Western Pact, will, as hitherto, proceed in the closest contact with one another.

(2) As long as Italy remains in the League of Nations, the Italian Government, in their policy within the League of Nations, will have

<sup>1</sup> The document here printed is drawn up in German and Italian, the texts arranged in parallel columns. The translation here printed is from the German text.

<sup>2</sup> The Roman numerals appear only in the Italian version.

full regard to the common interests of both countries, and for this purpose will keep in touch with the German Government. In particular also the Italian Government will in each case enter into consultation with the German Government over the question of taking part in various activities of the League of Nations (conferences, commissions etc.)

Should Italy decide to withdraw from the League of Nations, this would represent a new factor, which would be calculated to release the German Government from the offer made in this connexion in their proposals of March 7 and 31 last. In such a case, too, Germany and Italy would coordinate as far as possible their future attitude towards the League of Nations.

(3) The two Governments recognize that Communism is the greatest danger threatening the peace and the security of Europe. They confirm their intention to combat Communist propaganda with all their strength and to direct their own actions in this sense.

(4) As the Nationalists are in occupation of the greater part of Spain and as Germany and Italy have considerable economic interests there, the two Governments will recognize the Spanish National Government *de facto* as soon as possible. They will keep in touch with one another for the purpose of announcing *de jure* recognition subsequently. When they announce this, the two Governments will confirm the principle of non-intervention and respect for the integrity and territorial unity of Spain, her protectorates and her colonies.

The two Governments will jointly examine the question of when, after the *de facto* recognition, the time has come to declare the agreed arms embargo to be invalidated.

(5) The Italian Government express their satisfaction over the policy of the normalization of German-Austrian relations inaugurated by the Agreement of July 11 last between Germany and Austria. The German Government and the Italian Government are at one in their desire that this policy may continue to prove fruitful in the future.

(6) Prior to any international conference on economic and financial questions, the German and Italian Governments will come to an understanding beforehand on their attitude and will, as far as is possible, follow a joint line at these conferences.

(7) The Italian Government will give diplomatic support to Germany's efforts to obtain colonies with a view to securing a source of raw materials of her [Germany's] own.

The German and Italian Governments will, apart from the question of colonies, strive in common endeavour to facilitate the supply of raw materials for both countries.

(8) The German and Italian Governments will keep each other currently informed of the basic principles governing their commercial policies in the Danubian region.

Whilst the two Governments recognize the value of such cooperation, they reserve the right to have its nature and extent studied and fixed by their respective technical bodies.

The two Governments confirm their opposition, in future too, towards all endeavours to set up in the Danubian region, without the simultaneous participation of Germany and Italy, new economic organizations such as, for example, economic integration [*Zusammenschluss*] of the Little Entente, or an economic integration in the sense of the Tardieu Plan.

(9) On the occasion of the German recognition of the incorporation of Abyssinia, the Italian Government declare that they agree to the German-Italian Commercial Treaty of October 31, 1925, and the German-Italian Clearing Agreement of September 26, 1934, together with the supplementary agreements subsequently concluded, being extended to the Italian colonies and possessions, including Abyssinia. In addition, there will be concluded in respect of the colonies and possessions, including Abyssinia, appropriate agreements, such as are contained, in respect of commercial relations with the Kingdom of Italy, in the German-Italian Agreement of April 16, 1935, on the exchange of goods together with the supplementary agreements thereto.

The Italian Government will as far as possible promote the endeavours of German trade and industry to take part in the economic exploitation of Abyssinia.

The Italian Government declare that they are prepared to enter at once into conversations on the treatment of concessions legally acquired before October 3, 1935, by German Reich nationals in Abyssinia, and to conduct these conversations in a most benevolent and friendly spirit.

With regard to any concessions granted subsequently, the Italian Government reserve their views on each individual case.

The treaties and agreements necessary for the implementation of the points enumerated above shall be concluded as soon as possible. The negotiations thereon shall be entrusted to the German and Italian Government Committees for the settlement of German-Italian economic relations; these Committees shall hold their next joint session as soon as possible.

Done in two copies, each text being equally authentic.

C. VON NEURATH

G. CIANO

[EDITORS' NOTE: On October 23, 1936, a German-Japanese Agreement against the Communist International (the so-called Anti-Comintern Pact) and supplementary secret agreements were initialled in Berlin by Ribbentrop and the Japanese Ambassador, Mushakoji,



and an exchange of Notes (see document No. 625) took place. The signature of these Agreements was performed in Berlin on November 25, 1936, by Ribbentrop and Mushakoji (for which event and the full texts, see volume VI of this Series). The Agreements, which came into force immediately upon signature, comprised:

(i) An Agreement against the Communist International with Supplementary Protocol (this Agreement and Protocol were made public at the time of signature: see *Reichsgesetzblatt*, 1937, Pt. II, pp. 28-30; English translation in *Documents on International Affairs, 1936*, pp. 297-99.).

(ii) A Secret Supplementary Agreement to the Agreement against the Communist International (text printed in Series D, volume I, footnote 2a to document No. 463, on p. 734).

(iii) An exchange of Notes between Mushakoji and Ribbentrop (2871/564571-72), attached to the Secret Supplementary Agreement as Annexes I and II. In his Note, Mushakoji stated that both Governments were agreed that: "the 'political treaties' referred to in Article II of the aforementioned Secret Supplementary Agreement do not include either fishery treaties, or treaties concerning concessions, or treaties concerning frontier questions, between Japan, Manchukuo, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, and the like, which may be concluded between Japan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics." In his reply, Ribbentrop confirmed this interpretation.

(iv) An exchange of Notes between Ribbentrop and Mushakoji (2871/564573-74), attached to the Secret Supplementary Agreement as Annexes III and IV. In his Note, Ribbentrop stated that "the German Government do not regard the provisions of the existing political treaties between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, such as the Rapallo Treaty of 1922 and the Treaty of Neutrality of 1926, in so far as they have not become null and void under the conditions existing at the time this Agreement comes into force, as being in contradiction to the spirit of this Agreement and the obligations arising from it". In his reply, Mushakoji stated that his Government took note with sincere satisfaction of this communication (see also document No. 625).

(v) An Agreement that the Secret Supplementary Agreement, together with Annexes I-IV, should be kept secret and might only by mutual consent be revealed to third parties (2871/564578).

Little evidence as to the negotiations preceding the initialling of these Agreements has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives (see volume IV of this Series, Editors' Note, p. 948 and the present volume, documents Nos. 197, 362 and 509). According to the records of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East it appears that in April, 1936, the Japanese Ambassador, Mushakoji, returned to Berlin from long leave. On May 8, he was instructed that Japan considered it



proper to "make a vague engagement without limiting the matter" and to investigate "the limit and substance" of the German proposals, "keeping closely in touch with the leading figures" of the German Foreign Ministry and the Nazi Party. Prolonged negotiations with Ribbentrop followed. (See *Proceedings of the International Military Tribunal for the Far East*, Exhibit 2614, Arita to Mushakoji of May 8, 1936, and Exhibit 484, Report of the Investigation Committee to the Japanese Privy Council, November 20, 1936.)]

## No. 625

2871/564575-77

*German-Japanese Exchange of Notes on the occasion of the Initialling of the Agreement Against the Communist International*

(i)

*The Japanese Ambassador in Germany to Ambassador von Ribbentrop*

BERLIN, October 23, 1936.

MR. AMBASSADOR: I have the honour to inform Your Excellency that I have today, together with a telegram informing him that the initialling was performed this day, sent the enclosed telegram to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Arita.

At the same time, I take the opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest esteem.

MUSHAKOJI

[Enclosure]

The Ambassador in Berlin Count Mushakoji to His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Arita

BERLIN, October 23, 1936.

With reference to the Annexes III and IV<sup>1</sup> of the Secret Supplementary Agreement to the Agreement Against the Communist International, I have, on the basis of my negotiations with Ambassador von Ribbentrop, the firm conviction that the spirit of the above-mentioned Secret Agreement is alone decisive for the future policy of Germany towards the USSR

I have shown Ambassador von Ribbentrop this telegram and received his agreement.

MUSHAKOJI

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<sup>1</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1138.

(ii)

*Ambassador von Ribbentrop to the Japanese Ambassador in Germany*

[BERLIN], October 23, 1936.

MR. AMBASSADOR: I have the honour to confirm to Your Excellency the receipt of your letter of October 23. I have taken note of it, as well as of the contents of the telegram to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Arita, of which a copy was enclosed.

At the same time I take the opportunity to renew to Your Excellency the assurances of my highest esteem.

R[IBBENTROP]

[EDITORS' NOTE: On October 24, Count Ciano was received by Hitler at Berchtesgaden. No record of their conversation has been found in the German Foreign Ministry archives. For Ciano's record see his *L'Europa verso la Catastrofe*, pp. 93-99; English translation in *Ciano's Diplomatic Papers*, pp. 56-60.]

## No. 626

3405/E013673

*The Ambassador in the United States to the Foreign Ministry*

Telegram

No. 293 of October 24

WASHINGTON, November [sic] 24, 1936—11:44 p.m.

Received November [sic] 25—9.00 a.m.

With reference to your telegram No. 193 of [October] 20.<sup>1</sup>

Careful investigations amongst all circles concerned have shown that the President is not, in the foreseeable future, expected to take the initiative for a peace conference or in the sphere of disarmament. The State Department is at present engaged in preparations for the Pan-American Conference at Buenos Aires<sup>2</sup> for which Hull will be leaving to attend in person at the beginning of November. A project of the nature indicated by Dodd has been described by Hull to a confidant as quite hopeless, since it was inconceivable that a compromise between European Governments who were diametrically opposed to each other in politics could be reached through an international conference. Nevertheless, the rumour that the President plans large-scale international action persists here, especially in Republican circles, where it is used in conversations as an argument to expose the President's ego-centric aspirations for power.

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 611, footnote 3.

<sup>2</sup> The Inter-American Conference for the Maintenance of Peace, held Dec. 1-23, 1936.

Instructions to Dodd to take soundings in Berlin were not issued by the State Department. Dodd's *démarche*, which, incidentally, according to information from the State Department, corresponds to Bullitt's similar unauthorized soundings in Paris, is presumably to be ascribed to the fact that when receiving American Ambassadors during their home leave the President is in the habit of informally discussing the international situation, with special regard to creating a lasting state of peace through the better distribution of raw materials and other economic methods.

Circumstances permitting, a possible initiative by the American Government on this basis is more likely than that they should intervene in political conflicts in Europe which are regarded as hopeless here. Despatch No. 1320 of October 19<sup>3</sup> on the same subject is on the way.<sup>4</sup>

LUTHER

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

<sup>4</sup> Marginal note: "St[ate] S[ecretary]: It should be noted in connexion with this telegram that the Embassy in Washington was instructed to find out 'unobtrusively' further details about the intentions of the Government there. W[eizsäcker], Oct. 26."

## No. 627

6044/E446041-42

*Minister Weizsäcker to Counsellor of Legation Bibra*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 26, 1936.

DEAR HERR VON BIBRA: Herr Diewerge of the Ministry of Propaganda called on me a few days ago to explain the Propaganda Ministry's plan of action for the Frankfurter trial.<sup>2</sup> He introduced his remarks by stating that the plan had already been submitted to the Führer and approved by him. There thus remains nothing more for me to remark on this score.

The Ministry of Propaganda's plan is, understandably, specially directed towards the Jewish question. Switzerland, in so far as she does not otherwise occasion, is to be left out of the affair for the present. The course of the trial as such and the sentence imposed are only of secondary importance to the Ministry of Propaganda.

From the point of view of foreign policy, of our relations with Switzerland, and of the circumstances of the Germans in Switzerland, it is, of course, important that, whatever may be the outcome of the trial itself, it should remain confined as far as possible to the criminal aspects of the case and should not infringe on spheres where the existence of the Germans in Switzerland might be affected or endangered.

<sup>1</sup> Sigismund, Freiherr von Bibra, German Chargé d'Affaires in Berne.

<sup>2</sup> i.e., the trial of David Frankfurter for the assassination of Landesgruppenleiter Gustloff; see also vol. iv of this Series, documents Nos. 536, 540, 541 and 570.

In any case, both points of view, that of the Ministry of Propaganda and that of the Foreign Ministry, are entirely compatible. For the purposes of the Ministry of Propaganda, it would in all probability be sufficient, without interfering with the conduct of the trial, merely to intervene where the conduct of the trial gave us occasion to do so. If we leave it to the other side to take the offensive in their plea, and ourselves wait and see whether or not the other side is cut short by those conducting the trial, we shall be in a very good tactical position. For the purposes of the campaign against the Jews there will then doubtless still remain a wide field, especially when the trial is over.

I have tried to make it abundantly clear to Herr Diewerge how important it is, in this case too, that we should appear as the ones who have been attacked, and—or so it seems to me—he has adopted this point of view. I did, however, feel it incumbent on me to inform you too of this. I have given Herr Hack<sup>3</sup> a brief verbal account of the position, but perhaps you could show him this letter as well.

With best wishes and Heil Hitler!

Yours etc.,

WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>3</sup> Press Attaché to the German Legation in Berne.

## No. 628

116/66274-81

### *Memorandum by the Acting Director of the Political Department*

BERLIN, October 26, 1936.

President of the Senate Greiser from Danzig made a report today to the Foreign Minister and the State Secretary about a *démarche* undertaken in Danzig by the Polish Minister, Papée. A minute about this visit from Papée<sup>1</sup> and the translation of a memorandum which Papée left with Herr Greiser are attached.

The upshot of Herr Greiser's report was that, on the German side too, there was no need for precipitancy over the negotiations,<sup>2</sup> and that therefore Herr Greiser would not, as far as could be foreseen, need to cut short his four weeks' stay at Wildungen, which he was about to begin.

The Foreign Minister stressed to the President of the Senate that the Danzig-Polish arrangements [*Abreden*] must not be regarded in isolation from the background of German-Polish relations and the general political situation. A *coup de main* was out of the question. At present no change could be made in the legal position in respect of the relationship between Danzig and the League of Nations. A

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<sup>1</sup> This minute by Greiser is here printed as Enclosure 1.

<sup>2</sup> See also document No. 575.



transfer to Poland of certain of the rights of the High Commissioner must be avoided. Poland's rights should not be curtailed, but on no account should they be extended either. Ascertaining the will of the people of Danzig as to whether they wished to continue to tolerate a League of Nations Commissioner would not therefore affect the essence of that dependency upon the League from which Danzig was suffering. If the yoke of the League was to be thrown off, then the whole of German policy would have to support this. A decision as to the time for this must be reserved for agreement between the Foreign Minister and the Führer.

The President of the Senate entirely agreed with these remarks.

WEIZSÄCKER

[Enclosure 1]

MINUTE

DANZIG, October 24, 1936.

Minister Papée called on me today, having put off his visit from yesterday to today, and told me he had been instructed by his Government to make an official *démarche* to me. He said these instructions were by reason of the resolution taken by the Council of the League of Nations in October. The *démarche* covered a number of points and was couched in Polish. He gave me the text in Polish and said he would proceed to read out to me a translation into German, for the accuracy of which he made no claim. The Polish text was the authentic one.

Minister Papée then read me the German translation of the *démarche*. At the end he said he must give me an explanation in respect of one point, namely, that of prejudice to the rights of the Polish population. He summed up his explanation as follows:

- (a) Various laws and ordinances of the Senate could not, in the Polish view, be held to be compatible with the Constitution.
- (b) In particular the application of the ordinance of last summer, whereby political decisions by the President of the Police concerning the dissolution of associations were no longer subject to judicial review but only to that of the Senate. This could adversely affect the work of Polish organizations.
- (c) The prohibition of complaints by Danzig citizens to political tribunals external to the Government. This ordinance could lead to Danzig citizens of Polish nationality rendering themselves liable to prosecution if they laid complaints with him.
- (d) The activities of and influence exerted by the Party, particularly in economic circles, were having a disruptive effect on the activities of the Polish and Jewish economic circles of Polish nationality[sic] in the Port of Danzig. This seriously prejudiced the Polish right to free economic development.

Furthermore, the Warsaw Government found it particularly unpleasant to have the Senate conducting a policy of *faits accomplis*. He wished, in sum, once again to point out that the Polish Government attached importance to clearing up this question with the Senate in peace and quiet, but that, on the other hand, ways and means must be found of bringing about a solution which could be approved on behalf of [*sic*] the Polish Government *vis-à-vis* the League of Nations and also by the Powers participating in the League of Nations. Moreover the Polish Government intended to refrain from releasing to the press this *démarche* to the Danzig Senate, in order not to complicate the situation unnecessarily in advance.

I told Minister Papée in reply that I naturally could not express any attitude to the *démarche* just made to me, but that on the other hand I derived the impression from the text of the *démarche* that it would be apt to complicate—indeed perhaps even to wreck—the relations that had hitherto been so good between Danzig and Poland, and more particularly the will to an understanding with Poland repeatedly expressed by the Danzig Party and Government. Although I did not feel myself competent to adopt a definitive attitude on this *démarche*, yet I must at once point out that it had been several times declared by Party and Government quarters (and that this declaration could also be substantiated in official form by a convention, or by a State visit, or by other things) that Danzig did not desire to upset in any way either the Polish rights as established in treaties and conventions or the rights hitherto enjoyed by the Polish minority, but that, on the contrary, Danzig was prepared to confirm the existence of these rights in every way. Nevertheless, apart from this Danzig must reserve a completely free hand in respect of internal political developments and in particular *vis-à-vis* the parties still extant here. This development, which was inevitable and could not be halted by formal provisions, would not be hampered but would rather be promoted by the Danzig Government. The Polish Government would simply have to resign themselves to that. Furthermore, I would submit this *démarche* to the full Senate and also to the National Socialist Party for their deliberation and after obtaining clarification I would take it up again with him. Dealing with the matter expeditiously was complicated by the circumstance that severe ill-health compelled me to undergo a cure at Wildungen and that naturally my colleagues could not be prepared to adopt a definitive attitude without me. For this reason there would be some delay in the Senate's adoption of an attitude. On the other hand, however, I noted with gratitude that Poland wished to see the whole matter dealt with in complete peace and quiet and I therefore for my part proposed that first of all the competent departmental officials should discuss it in detail so that an official attitude would only be adopted after my return.

To this Minister Papée replied that the Polish Government could not

entirely share this view; although Poland wished to treat the matter in peace and quiet, yet one always had to allow for the prevailing atmosphere and this atmosphere was at the moment particularly unfavourable and was having a very disturbing effect on Polish public opinion, since there was a danger that the Senate might persist in its policy of *faits accomplis*. If it were possible to restore an atmosphere of confidence and calm here, this would provide the prerequisites for handling things slowly and tranquilly.

In reply I stressed that in my view all was calm and that no Pole in Danzig was suffering harm. I would think the *démarche* over very carefully and then at a given moment revert to it.

GREISER

[Enclosure 2]

Translation

DANZIG, October 24, 1936.

1. By its resolution of October 5 of this year,<sup>3</sup> the Council of the League of Nations, which carries out the League of Nations' duties as a guarantor of the Statute of the Free City, has assigned to the Polish Government a mandate to investigate the whole situation that has developed in Danzig as a result of the relations of the Senate with the Council of the League of Nations and its High Commissioner, especially since the July meeting of the Council of the League after the familiar statements made by the President of the Senate<sup>4</sup> as well as after the promulgation by the Senate of the decrees of July 18 of this year.<sup>5</sup> In the opinion of the Polish Government, the object of this mandate was to bring about a *détente* in this situation within the framework of good Polish-Danzig relations, and to seek a solution such as might satisfy all interested parties. This conviction was expressed in the statement made by the representative of the Polish Government at the meeting of the Council of the League on October 5, when he observed that the Polish Government hoped that in carrying out their mission they would be able to count upon the cooperation of the Senate.<sup>6</sup>

2. The Polish Government were entitled to expect that the Senate would share their desire to settle the matter by means of a direct agreement in an atmosphere of good Polish-Danzig relations, that it would create no new difficulties, and would not complicate the situation by any fresh *faits accomplis*. Contrary to these expectations, the Senate are continuing to promulgate and implement decrees, the compatibility

<sup>3</sup> See document No. 573, footnote 3.

<sup>4</sup> Evidently a reference to Greiser's speeches of July 4; see document No. 430 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 472, footnote 1.

<sup>6</sup> For the text of Komarnicki's statement see League of Nations: *Official Journal*, November 1936, p. 1192.



of which with the existing and valid legal position is, like that of the July decrees, extremely doubtful, and which decrees, by their nature, are contributing to an aggravation of the situation and to making the task assigned to the Polish Government more difficult.

3. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, the Polish Government wish to make it clear that, in as much as the principles on which the Statute of the Free City rests, and the purposes for which it was created, do not, in their opinion, impose upon them the duty of concerning themselves with the domestic party-political struggles among the German section of the population of the Free City of Danzig, yet they are nevertheless wholly unable to admit of the course taken by these struggles, or the unilateral system embodied in their outcome, regulating the life of the territory and harbour of Danzig, or the rights of the Polish population, in a way which often diverges in practice from the legal position laid down by treaty. For it cannot be denied that in practice a number of the decrees, both political and economic, promulgated by the present Senate, deeply encroach upon the rights of Poland and of the Polish population in Danzig. The Diplomatic Representative of the Republic of Poland has already expressed his misgivings in this matter to the President of the Senate during their most recent conversation on October 15.<sup>7</sup> For a number of months he has, moreover, been drawing the Senate's attention to the disruption of the fundamental equilibrium and to the distortion of the legal situation in Danzig which are the result of the unilateral measures taken by the Danzig Senate. These warnings by the Diplomatic Representative, combined with proposals for conversations, have hitherto produced no result. Quite the contrary; the Senate of the Free City is not desisting from its policy of creating *faits accomplis*.

4. Hence, if the Senate should not be inclined to revise its methods of proceeding, the Polish Government would, apart from their duty of informing the other members of the Council about the situation in Danzig, be compelled to consider the possibility of supplementing the unilateral decrees of the Senate by appropriate regulations on the part of Poland, and to contemplate measures that would protect them from the possibility of the creation of *faits accomplis* by the Senate. The Polish Government have not yet lost hope that the conversations upon which they are now to embark with the Senate will permit of an agreement being reached and make such measures superfluous.

5. In conclusion, the Polish Government consider it to be their duty to state that they are aware of certain public appearances and speeches made recently by leading members of the Senate and the Party,<sup>8</sup> speeches which they must describe as being in contradiction to the

<sup>7</sup> A copy of Greiser's minute on this conversation was transmitted to Berlin by Radowitz under cover of report IG 1321 of Oct. 17 (1723/399784-93).

<sup>8</sup> See documents Nos. 623, 630 and 636.



general line taken by the National Socialist Party as known to them hitherto, and as being exceedingly harmful to Polish-Danzig relations. The Polish Government utter a most emphatic warning, both to the Senate and to Party members in the Free City, against such public appearances, the consequence of which can be only profound disappointment, if not grave convulsions.

## No. 629

1159/326435-36

*The Minister in Belgium to the Foreign Ministry*

SECRET

A 436

BRUSSELS, October 27, 1936.

Received October 29.

Pol. II 2496.

Subject: The Antwerp *Matin* on the alleged Degrelle-Dr. Goebbels meeting.

With reference to my report A 420 of October 22, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

The Antwerp *Matin* and its Brussels associate, *Le Journal du Matin*, as also the Brussels *Midi Journal*, publish, in their issues dated October 28, textually identical reports allegedly emanating from a special correspondent in Berlin, which state that the Rexist leader Léon Degrelle, on the occasion of his visit to Germany, which has been dealt with in the press here, also saw Reich Minister Dr. Goebbels. The latter is said to have congratulated the Rexist leader on his successes and to have given him good advice on how to handle the masses and how to suppress all opposition in the event of a seizure of power. Dr. Goebbels is said to have advised Degrelle not to speak of a dictatorship but of a popular movement and to be on his guard against Left-wing circles in Belgium who would bitterly oppose his movement. Moreover, one should not be afraid at the decisive moment to arrest and intern political opponents on the pretext of a Bolshevist conspiracy. In reply to this, Degrelle is said to have stated that he had the whole army and a large part of the *gendarmerie* on his side. The problem of Eupen-Malmédy is said also to have been mentioned on this occasion and that Degrelle let it be understood that one of the first acts of his Government would be to make good the wrong which Germany had suffered in the matter of Eupen-Malmédy.

The alleged Berlin correspondent further states that the political police in Berlin have started an investigation of the indiscretions concerning the visit of M. Degrelle which have so far become known.

In this connexion I feel it incumbent upon me to mention that,

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (1159/326432-34).

according to information from a most reliable source, Degrelle, at his discussions with the leaders of the Flemish Nationalists, which later led to the well-known agreement,<sup>2</sup> told a small number of them in confidence that he had seen the Führer who had encouraged him in his fight and had merely warned him not to disregard, in his struggle, the fact that there were two distinct nationalities and races in Belgium. He had, in addition, spent a week-end with Herr von Ribbentrop who had also given him encouragement.

The article of the Antwerp *Matin* of October 28 is enclosed (in duplicate).<sup>3</sup>

RICHTHOFEN

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 581 and footnote 1 thereto.

<sup>3</sup> Not found.

## No. 630

1723/399867-69

### *The Foreign Ministry to the Consulate General in Danzig*

BERLIN, October 28, 1936.

zu Pol. V 4715<sup>1</sup> [Ang.] 4.

Subject: Performance of the task assigned to Poland by the Council of the League of Nations in the Danzig question.

In connexion with the subject above referred to copies are enclosed for your information of the following:

- a) a report from the German Embassy in Warsaw of October 23;<sup>1</sup>
- b) a memorandum of October 26 on a conversation which took place in the Foreign Ministry with Senate President Greiser.<sup>2</sup>

With reference to the last sentence of the report from the Embassy in Warsaw of October 23—P III la/10.36—the Embassies in London and Rome, the Legations at The Hague, at Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo and Helsinki, as well as the Consulate at Geneva, have been asked to suggest persons who would make a suitable successor to Lester, but without taking any soundings for this purpose at this stage.<sup>3</sup> It is left to your discretion whether to inform the Head of the Foreign Department of the Senate of this in confidence.

With reference to President Greiser's memorandum on his conversation with M. Papée on October 24<sup>4</sup>—of which you have a copy—I would be grateful for a report as soon as possible as to whether the

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 623.

<sup>2</sup> Document No. 628.

<sup>3</sup> These Missions and Consulate, and the Legation in Berne, were instructed accordingly by despatch zu Pol. V 4715 [Ang.] 1 and 2, dated Oct. 28 (1723/399863-65).

<sup>4</sup> See document No. 628, enclosure 1.

discussions between departmental officials which President Greiser proposed to M. Papée have meanwhile begun and with what subjects they are intended to deal. In this connection you should inform the Senate that the Foreign Ministry attach the utmost importance to being kept informed constantly and in such good time about discussions of this nature, that they are in a position to express their view on the questions dealt with.

Furthermore, you should, in conjunction with the Senate, inform us of which public appearances and speeches by leading elements of the Senate and the Party in Danzig might be meant in paragraph (5) of the memorandum of October 24 which M. Papée handed to President Greiser,<sup>5</sup> and if possible transmit the text of the speeches concerned.

By order:  
VON WEIZSÄCKER

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<sup>5</sup> Document No. 628, enclosure 2.

## No. 631

2558/523935-36

### *Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 28, 1936.  
RM 774.

The British Ambassador called on me yesterday and wished to learn further details from me about the negotiations conducted with Count Ciano. I referred him to the statements made by Ciano to the press,<sup>1</sup> which had been drawn up in agreement with me. The Ambassador then wanted to know whether it was true that we were now going to recognize the Franco Government. I told him our recognition of the Franco Government would take place when we considered that the time had arrived, that is to say, when the greater part of Spain was occupied by Franco's people. I thought I might further observe that the British Government had also recently lost some of their enthusiasm for those in power in Madrid and that they too were gradually coming to the conviction that power in Madrid was in the hands of Communists and Anarchists. The Ambassador admitted this and cited, in particular, the cynical letter of the Madrid Government in reply to the *démarche* regarding the safety of the hostages.<sup>2</sup>

The Ambassador then also wanted to know what I thought about the fate of the Locarno conversations. I told him that we continued to hold the view that a new Western pact should be arrived at. When I considered the replies by the four Locarno Powers so far to hand, I was indeed

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 618, footnote 2.

<sup>2</sup> For a summary of the Spanish Note see *The Times* of Oct. 26, 1936.

somewhat sceptical as to whether a result could quickly be achieved. This did not matter at bottom, since, after all, no one would dream of starting a war on account of the German-French or German-Belgian frontier. But as long as the French went on sticking to their alliances with Russia and the other Eastern States in the present fashion, I could scarcely see any possibility of arriving at the conclusion of a new treaty, as we would in no case be willing to agree to the exceptions which France desired for her treaties.

FRHR. V. NEURATH

## No. 632

3317/E007814-15

### *Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 28, 1936.

The French Ambassador who called on me today began by telling me of a conversation which he had had yesterday with the Italian Ambassador. He said that Signor Attolico had on this occasion—in complete contrast to the attitude which he and the members of the Italian Embassy had adopted in December when they were quite desperate in view of the Abyssinian situation—worn a very confident air; “*il avait mangé du lion*”. In brief, the substance of Attolico’s statements had been that Italy and Germany had agreed during the Ciano visit to give up the plan of a Western pact as hopeless. Italy and Germany were now also agreed that the League of Nations was finished. M. François-Poncet asked whether this information was correct, for it was, of course, important for the French Government to know whether the German Government were now really adopting such an attitude.

I told M. François-Poncet that, as regards the Western Pact plan, there must be a misunderstanding. It was certainly clear that, in view of the very widely divergent attitudes of the five Locarno Powers to the new Western Pact plan, the prospects for a successful outcome of the negotiations could only be regarded with a certain amount of scepticism, but that our fundamental intention to make every effort to reach a positive result had not altered at all. Nor had anything now been agreed with the Italian Government which entailed giving up the plan. I said that we had indeed been aware from the beginning that there were very great difficulties, nor had the French Note,<sup>1</sup> some of the details of which I questioned, reduced these difficulties, but, for the time being, we were not giving up hope that it would be possible to find common ground upon which we could meet. As we saw the matter,

<sup>1</sup> See document No. 607, enclosure.



the next stage would now presumably be that the British Government would consider the four Notes which they had received and then approach the four Powers again. We should then see how the matter developed further. We were still of the opinion that thorough diplomatic clarification must take place, as otherwise there was the danger that a conference meeting without such preparation would soon fail, a result which, as M. François-Poncet confirmed, would certainly not be welcome to the French Government either. As to the question of the League of Nations, which Signor Attolico was alleged to have broached, I told M. François-Poncet that we too held the view that the League of Nations had nothing to do with the Western Pact. As for our attitude to the League of Nations in general, this depended entirely on further developments. Germany was not committed to a policy in this question.

I had the impression that M. François-Poncet wanted somehow to drive a wedge between us and the Italians and I therefore scrupulously avoided making any remark distancing us from the Italians. I did, however, contradict the view that we had completely given up the Western Pact plan and had made an agreement with the Italians to this effect.

DIECKHOFF

## No. 633

1833/418825-31

### *The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4243

LONDON, October 28, 1936.

Pol. I 2816.

Subject: Conversation with Sir Robert Craigie regarding the results of the Montreux Conference.

With reference to our report A 3304 of September 7, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

Sir Robert Craigie asked Prince Bismarck to call at the Foreign Office today in order, in connexion with the conversation of September 7, to expound to him again the British Government's viewpoint in the question of the effects of the Conference of Montreux upon the German strategic situation at sea. As I had already taken over the duties of Counsellor of Embassy, Prince Bismarck and I jointly conducted the conversation with Sir Robert Craigie.

Sir Robert handed us the *aide-mémoire* of which a copy is enclosed herewith. He commented that it was only intended as a record of his verbal statements and not as an official document.

The Foreign Office obviously attached importance to handing us this

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 529.

answer before the resumption of the discussions on the naval question with the object of demolishing one of the arguments which we had employed in the naval negotiations.

We confined ourselves to receiving Sir Robert's statements. If you wish the *aide-mémoire* to be answered in detail, please let me have instructions. Otherwise we shall take the line at the naval discussions here that the statements of the Foreign Office are not calculated to dispel our fears regarding the Convention of Montreux.<sup>2</sup>

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> Marginal note: "The Engl[ish] arguments are not convincing. v[on] N[eurath], Nov. 2."

[Enclosure]<sup>3</sup>

CONFIDENTIAL

FOREIGN OFFICE

### AIDE MÉMOIRE

In the course of a conversation with Sir R. Craigie on September 7th, Prince von Bismarck stated that he had received instructions to mention unofficially the serious view which his Government took of the strategical consequences of the recent decisions taken at the Montreux Conference. From the ensuing conversation it appeared that the view taken by the German Government may be summarised briefly as follows:

On general grounds of principle the German Government of course approved the granting to Turkey of authority to remilitarise the Straits, since Turkey had in this respect assumed equality of rights with other Powers. Nevertheless, if Turkey remained in as close relations with Soviet Russia as she is today, Soviet ships would in practice be able to issue from the Straits in war time, attack enemy warships and enemy trade and then retire to the safety of the Black Sea without incurring the risk of pursuit. Similarly the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics would now be able to leave the naval defence of the Black Sea to Turkey and to concentrate all her naval forces in the Baltic. The situation had, the German Government felt, been modified to Germany's disadvantage.

Sir R. Craigie was unable to agree with the above conclusions which, he thought, must be based on some misunderstanding of the position. He indicated the reasons for his disagreement, but promised that the view of the German Government, communicated thus unofficially, should be examined by the competent authorities.

The matter has now been further considered and it is thought

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<sup>3</sup> This enclosure is in English in the original.

desirable that Prince von Bismarck should be informed, in the same unofficial manner that, were such views to be put forward officially, His Majesty's Government would feel bound to join issue with them, for the following reasons:

The main point made by Prince von Bismarck was that Soviet ships would now, in virtue of the new Straits Convention of Montreux, be able to issue from the Straits in war time, attack enemy warships and enemy trade, and then retire to the safety of the Black Sea without incurring the risk of pursuit.

It should be made clear at the outset that it was precisely the avoidance of such a situation which was one of the main objects of the United Kingdom Delegation at Montreux, an object which they were successful in securing.

A war, such as that contemplated in Prince von Bismarck's hypothesis, must be one in which Turkey would be either a neutral or a belligerent. If neutral, her obligations would be those clearly laid down in Article 19 of the Montreux Convention, according to the main provision of which vessels of war belonging to belligerent Powers, including of course Black Sea Powers, could not pass through the Straits. Turkey therefore, if neutral, would be obliged to prevent passage through the Straits of any belligerent fleet impartially. The only cases in which Turkey, being neutral, could afford passage to belligerents, would be the following:

(a) Cases arising out of the application of the Covenant of the League (Article 25 of the Convention);

(b) Cases of assistance rendered to a State victim of aggression in virtue of a treaty of mutual assistance, binding on Turkey, concluded within the framework of the Covenant of the League of Nations, and registered and published, etc.;

(c) Cases where warships of belligerents had become separated from their bases and were allowed to return thereto. (This provision was intended to prevent naval units of any Power from being cut off from their bases by the outbreak of a war.)

As regards the exception in favour of treaties of mutual assistance, it is important to note that this is limited to treaties to which Turkey is a party—that is to say, it only comes into force in those cases where Turkey is already under an obligation to discriminate in favour of one party to a dispute at the expense of another. It would be virtually impossible for Turkey to implement such a treaty without herself becoming involved in the war as a belligerent—in fact, it may be said that discrimination between two belligerents is contrary to the whole conception of neutrality.

If, on the other hand, the war should be one in which Turkey was or became a belligerent, then, since *ex hypothesi* Russia would already be a belligerent, Turkey must be either her ally or her enemy. In the



first case she would in any circumstance, as pointed out below, whether the Montreux Convention existed or not, close the Straits, or render their passage impossibly dangerous, to Russia's enemies. In the second she would obviously welcome any ally against Russia and close the Straits to Russian ships.

It should be noted, in connexion with the above observations, that His Majesty's Government cannot accept the assumption that appears to underlie Prince von Bismarck's statement, namely that, if Turkey remains in as close relations with Soviet Russia as she is today, she cannot be expected to carry out impartially her obligations under the Montreux Convention. On the contrary, it is at least equally legitimate to surmise that, once the Straits have been remilitarised, Turkey will acquire a sense of strength and independence which will free her from the necessity of assuming commitments which might conceivably be held to conflict with her existing obligations under the Covenant.

Let it be supposed, however, for the sake of argument, that Turkey either concludes an alliance with Soviet Russia or enters into so close a relationship with the latter that she may be confidently expected to become an ally, should that Power be engaged in war. Would there in such circumstances be any sound basis for the contention that the strategical position of Germany has been weakened as a result of the conclusion of the Montreux Convention and the remilitarisation of the Straits?

It has already been noted that, if Turkey were Russia's ally in war, she could make the passage of the Straits impossible to an enemy. In this respect the position does not seem to differ materially from what it would have been in practice had the Lausanne Convention still been in force. It is not believed that, even during the currency of the Lausanne Convention, any naval Power would, in practice, have taken the risk of sending a squadron into the Black Sea with the knowledge that Turkey was likely to side with Soviet Russia and to take any opportunity to embarrass the enemies of that country. In such circumstances, a movable armament of sufficient calibre to deter the passage of warships and to act as a complete bar to transport, supply and ammunition ships could at any time have been placed in the demilitarised zone, with serious effects for any squadron which had entered the Black Sea in pursuit of the Russian fleet. It is the view of His Majesty's Government that extended operations in the Black Sea by a Power unfriendly to Turkey would at no time have been possible, and that the so-called freedom of passage formerly enjoyed by belligerent vessels under the 1923 Convention was largely illusory. This being the case, His Majesty's Government consider that the right of fortification in the Straits granted to Turkey under the Montreux Convention has had little, if any, effect upon the military situation.

The second point mentioned by Prince von Bismarck was that



Soviet Russia would now be able to leave the naval defence of the Black Sea to Turkey and to concentrate all her naval forces in the Baltic. His Majesty's Government are unable to share this view for the following reasons:

(1) It is in the highest degree unlikely that any country would place itself unreservedly in the hands of another country, however friendly, by taking the action suggested in Prince von Bismarck's communication. Relations between States being subject to variation no country is likely to incur so grave a risk. Nor, in the particular circumstances under consideration, does it seem likely that Soviet Russia would denude the Black Sea of her naval forces precisely at a moment when Turkey's military strength is being enhanced through the remilitarisation of the zone of the Straits.

(2) The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is an Asiatic as well as a European Power and it is improbable that the Soviet Government would voluntarily deprive itself of the forces most readily available to reinforce the Far East and to protect Russian communications between Europe and the Far East. The conditions in the Gulf of Finland are such that the fleet of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics in this area is virtually immobilised for certain periods during the winter months, whereas a fleet stationed on the Black Sea coast could, except under the most abnormal conditions, always go to sea.

(3) It has always been the practice of Russia to have shipbuilding yards and dockyards in the Black Sea, and it is considered most unlikely that the task of moving them to the Baltic would be seriously considered. For the protection of these shipyards it seems virtually certain that Soviet Russia would wish to maintain adequate naval forces in those waters, however friendly Russo-Turkish relations may be at any given moment.

The grounds on which it is felt that neither Germany's strategical position nor that of His Majesty's Government have been prejudiced have been indicated in some detail because of the risk that general statements, unsupported by specific arguments, may prove misleading and even dangerous. It is hoped that the German Government, after taking the above points into consideration, will be prepared to agree that the strategical effects of the Montreux Convention are likely to be of less consequence than they had at first anticipated.

## No. 634

5950/E437767-70

*The Belgian Minister in Germany to the Acting State Secretary*<sup>1</sup>

BERLIN, October 28, 1936.

Pol. I 2819.

DEAR HERR DIECKHOFF: Thank you for having kindly sent me this morning the text of the Reich Government's reply<sup>2</sup> to the British Note of September 17.<sup>3</sup>

Please find enclosed a copy of my Government's reply to this same Note.

I am, etc.,

JACQUES DAVIGNON

<sup>1</sup> Both the document and the enclosure here printed are in French in the original.

<sup>2</sup> Of Oct. 12. See document No. 596, enclosure.

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 546, enclosure.

[Enclosure]

[October 22, 1936.]

MEMORANDUM IN REPLY TO THE BRITISH NOTE OF  
SEPTEMBER 17, 1936

1. By their memorandum of September 17, the British Government have been good enough to communicate to the Belgian Government their suggestions concerning the subject of the discussions which it is hoped to open in London between the five Powers signatory to the Treaty of Locarno. They have, at the same time, expressed the desire to receive, whether in writing, or orally, the observations of the Belgian Government.

2. In the words of the communiqué adopted at London on July 23, 1936,<sup>4</sup> "the first business to be undertaken should be to negotiate a new agreement to take the place of the Rhine Pact of Locarno, and to resolve, through the collaboration of all concerned, the situation created by the German initiative of March 7." The British Note of September 17 enumerates a certain number of questions which could at once usefully occupy the attention of the interested Governments. The Belgian Government gladly indicate their agreement to the programme thus defined.

3. In their memorandum, the British Government have been good enough to set forth, provisionally and in a general manner, their views on the different points thus set out.

In reply to the invitation addressed to them, the Belgian Government have the honour of confirming in writing their own views.

4. As far as the scope of the new agreement designed to take the place of the Treaty of Locarno is concerned, the Belgian Government consider

<sup>4</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 819.

that this agreement should provide for undertakings of non-aggression between the interested Powers.

5. As for the clauses which would guarantee the observation of these undertakings, the Government of His Majesty are particularly happy to observe that, as in the past, the Government of His Britannic Majesty are disposed to continue to confer upon Belgium the benefit of their guarantee, which is of great importance for the peace of Europe.

The Belgian Government have, equally, observed with satisfaction that the British Government have not made the guarantee envisaged in favour of Belgium dependent on the furnishing of a reciprocal guarantee. The Belgian Government consider that this question, so far as they are concerned, should apply in the same terms to the other States who are to be parties to the agreement, and they believe it useful to set out their reasons.

6. By reason of the geographical situation of Belgium, every aggression of which she would be the victim would constitute a direct menace to other Powers. In resisting entry to her own territory, Belgium contributes in the most efficacious manner to the security of the States bordering upon her. The accomplishment of this task is of such a kind as to demand heavy sacrifices and a very great effort.

Conscious of her duties towards the other nations as towards herself, Belgium is resolved upon this. She thereby creates for herself the right to eventual assistance which the Powers threatened via her territory would have a vital interest in rendering to her.

She believes that she is thus fulfilling to the limits of her strength the functions devolving upon her in this region of Europe, which has so often been exposed to the ravages of war.

Belgium will not, however, confine to this her contribution to the work of collective security. She will dedicate to the obligations inscribed in the Covenant that scrupulous fidelity of which she has always given proof in the past.

7. As far as the special provisions envisaged for the case of attack by air are concerned, the Belgian Government have, for more than a year, made evident the interest with which they approach such suggestions.

8. Finally the Government of His Majesty are of the opinion that the new agreement could usefully contain, as did the Treaty of Locarno, arbitration and conciliation clauses.

They consider that the resolution of the problems posed by Western security would make a powerful contribution to assuring the peace of Europe. They are ready to afford, for the purpose of concluding such an agreement, all the co-operation in their power.

## No. 635

116/66282

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 29, 1936.

RM 775.

I discussed the Danzig question with the Führer this afternoon and obtained his agreement to the following points regarding our attitude:

1) The selection of another League of Nations Commissioner for Danzig is the best solution in the present circumstances. The question of persons should be discussed with the Poles, and they should be persuaded to advocate in Geneva that the powers of the League of Nations Commissioner regarding the domestic affairs of Danzig should be restricted. Similarly we should discuss with the Poles their advocating that the League of Nations recognize the internal political developments in Danzig.

2) An extension of the rights of the Poles in Danzig should be prevented.

3) The plan propagated by Gauleiter Forster, that a plebiscite be held about the continuance of a League of Nations Commissioner in Danzig, is mistaken and is therefore not for consideration.

4) The anti-Polish propaganda of the Party in Danzig is to cease, as being inexpedient.

v. N[EURATH]

## No. 636

147/78423

*Memorandum by the Foreign Minister*

BERLIN, October 29, 1936.

RM 777.

The Polish Ambassador called on me today and spoke with great concern about the increasing anti-Polish propaganda in Danzig, expressed not only in the speech by Gauleiter Forster, of which we were aware, but also in various other items in which a boycott of Polish customs officials was called for. He handed me the attached memorandum,<sup>1</sup> which is obviously a shorthand report made by a Polish agent during the speeches by the Kreisleiter and the Gauleiter. He urgently requested that this state of affairs be quickly remedied.

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (147/78424-27); this gave extracts from speeches made by Kreisleiter Kaminski and Gauleiter Forster at an NSDAP meeting on Oct. 20, 1936.



2) The Ambassador also told me that he was empowered to inform me, on behalf of Foreign Minister Beck and General Rydz-Smigly, that Polish policy towards Germany would undergo no change of any kind.

3) The Ambassador finally suggested direct German-Polish conversations about the Danzig question. He stated as his Government's view that relations between Danzig and Poland could only be settled in an amicable fashion by means of direct conversations between his Government and ourselves. (On this see my memorandum of today's date about the Führer and Chancellor's instructions concerning Danzig.)<sup>2</sup>

V. N[EURATH]

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<sup>2</sup> Document No. 635.

### No. 637

395/212477-78

#### *Memorandum by the Acting State Secretary*

BERLIN, October 30, 1936.

The Japanese Ambassador called on me today and brought up the following points:

1. It had been observed with astonishment in Tokyo that Count Ciano, in his remarks to the press in Munich about the dangers of Communism,<sup>1</sup> had not been as clear and precise as had the comment in the German newspapers. Did this mean any divergence between Italian and German views? I told the Ambassador that, although we had signed no treaty with the Italians, either on the question of defence against Communism or on any other point, we had discussed in detail all the questions of interest to us, and had established that there was far-reaching coincidence of views. As far as the question of Communism was concerned, the German and Italian views were wholly identical. If Count Ciano, in his remarks to the press, had expressed himself somewhat differently from the German newspapers, this was solely a question of phrasing; in the matter itself we were at one with the Italians.

2. The Ambassador wanted to know whether the question of colonies had been discussed with Count Ciano. I told him that, like all the other important political points, this point too had been discussed, especially the question of the lack of raw materials, a problem which in many respects was the same for Germany as for Italy.

3. The Ambassador said that, although he had received express instructions from his Government not to bring up the question of the recognition of Manchukuo, yet nevertheless he would much like, solely

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<sup>1</sup> See document No. 618, footnote 2.

for his personal information, to know whether, now that we had recognized Abyssinia, the question of the recognition of Manchukuo had become more actual. I replied that at present the question had no immediacy for us; indeed, whilst still with us, Herr von Bülow had already told him (the Ambassador had referred to this conversation) that the question of recognizing Abyssinia and the question of recognizing Manchukuo were not on the same plane.<sup>2</sup> The Ambassador then again assured me that he was speaking entirely without instructions, that German-Manchukuo affairs were, of course, developing very satisfactorily, and that he too was of the opinion that we had no need for haste in the matter.

4. Finally the Ambassador mentioned the agreement at present before the State Privy Council in Tokyo and said that he hoped that this agreement would be accepted.<sup>3</sup> He saw a certain danger in the fact that in the last few days numerous reports had again appeared in the Japanese press about close cooperation between the German and Chinese Governments. He was particularly concerned about assertions that the Klein group had promised the Chinese Government to install fortifications on the Yangtse and to set up a military arsenal in Ping-chan (Hunan Province) in return for Chinese supplies of wolfram and antimony. Such reports, he said, were calculated to endanger the agreement or at least to make it difficult for the Government to get it through the Privy Council. I told the Ambassador that I knew nothing about this; the Ambassador, however, insisted very strongly that the point should be cleared up so that he could inform, and, if possible, reassure Tokyo.

DIECKHOFF

<sup>2</sup> This would appear to be a reference to the conversation recorded by Bülow in a memorandum of May 15 (1946/435649-50).

<sup>3</sup> See Editors' Note, p. 1138 and document No. 625.

## No. 638

7790/E562947-63

*The Embassy in Great Britain to the Foreign Ministry*

A 4252

LONDON, October 31, 1936.

zu SK 243.<sup>1</sup>

Subject: Naval Conversations.

Enclosed is a memorandum concerning a conversation with the British

<sup>1</sup> Not printed (7790/E562946). This was the covering letter, Mar. No. 911 of Oct. 31, 1936, under which Wassner forwarded the document here printed to the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. A note at the head of the document here printed records that the Naval Conferences Group had received another copy from the Foreign Ministry under their file number Pol. I 2385 g.

naval experts. During a short conversation on October 27, the Ambassador had informed Sir Robert Craigie that the German Government did not intend to send naval experts to London, as had been suggested by Sir Robert Craigie in a letter to Prince Bismarck (see our airgram No. 232 of October 23).<sup>2</sup> However, Minister Woermann and Rear Admiral Wassner, who had taken part in all the naval conversations, would be available for conversations of this kind. Thereupon, on October 29, Sir Robert Craigie invited us to a conversation.

As emerges from the attached memorandum, the British Government intend to enter into fresh conversations as soon as possible with the representatives of the Soviet Union. The British side promised that an attempt would be made, in accordance with our demands, to induce the Soviet Government to modify their attitude. Before these conversations are begun, the British Government ask for our views on the suggestions and proposals set forth in the attached memorandum, namely:

1. Modification of the reservation made in the German memorandum of October 5, 1936,<sup>3</sup> under 1 bb;
2. Deletion of reservation 1 cc;
3. Is Germany prepared to equip only two of her capital ships with 15-inch guns, if the Soviet Union undertakes to arm only two capital ships with [guns of] a calibre of 15 inches (cf. reservation 2)?
4. Proposal that reservation 3 be redrafted.
5. Is Germany prepared to waive reservation 4 if the Soviet Union can be induced to include the "minor war vessels" in the exchange of information?
6. Proposal to incorporate provisions in accordance with Point 13 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936,<sup>4</sup> in the Supplementary Protocol to the German-British Naval Treaty of June 18, 1935.
7. An answer to the question as to whether we would be prepared for a direct exchange of information with the Soviet Government.

For the time being, no further date has been fixed with Sir Robert Craigie. He attaches particular importance, however, to receiving a really prompt answer.

Meanwhile, as is reported in this morning's press, the Soviet Ambassador<sup>5</sup> has called at the Foreign Office in order to continue the Anglo-Russian naval negotiations.

By order:  
WOERMANN

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<sup>2</sup> Not printed (7790/E562941-42).

<sup>3</sup> Document No. 571.

<sup>4</sup> Document No. 470, enclosure.

<sup>5</sup> Ivan Maisky.

[Enclosure]

MINUTES ON A CONVERSATION AT THE FOREIGN OFFICE ABOUT THE  
NAVAL NEGOTIATIONS

LONDON, October 29, 1936.

## PRESENT:

For the German side:  
Minister Woermann  
Rear Admiral Wassner  
Secretary of Legation Dr.  
Kordt

For the British side:  
Assistant Under Secretary of  
State Sir Robert Craigie  
Captain Phillips, R.N.  
Mr. Holman

Sir Robert Craigie began by stating that, in view of the shortness of the time remaining before the end of December 1936, the British Government welcomed the opportunity to give some oral explanations concerning the naval question, with a view to speeding up the negotiations.

The British Government intended, however, in accordance with the desire expressed by us, also to provide written comments on the political observations contained in the German Note of October 5. The British Government had yesterday already furnished written comments on the results of the Montreux Conference (cf. the German Embassy's Report [No. A 4243] of October 28, 1936).<sup>6</sup> At today's conversations he proposed to confine himself purely to the technical points raised in the German Note of October 5.

To this I replied that the German reservations could naturally only be properly discussed and understood if the general political observations contained in the German Note were also taken into account. I was prepared first to listen to the technical comments of the British side, but must reserve the right to revert to the political arguments during the discussion on technical questions too.

Turning to section I of the German Note of October 5, Sir Robert Craigie stated that he wished briefly to point out that the German press tended to give the impression that Britain had handed the Russians every sort of concession on a plate. This was not the case.<sup>7</sup> On the contrary, each point had been very tenaciously contested.

As far as the *Far Eastern Fleet* was concerned, the view that the Soviet Union's Far Eastern fleet had not been limited qualitatively was not in accordance with the facts and Russia had in fact undertaken to abide by the qualitative limits laid down in the London Treaty, as long as there were no reliable reports that Japanese construction was exceeding the qualitative limits therein laid down. Russia had therefore

<sup>6</sup> Document No. 633.

<sup>7</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "But it was [*doch*]."



undertaken to abide by the qualitative limits as long as these were not exceeded by Japan. Should this situation occur, the Russian Government would inform the British Government of this fact and would then receive freedom to construct only the vessels destined for the Far Eastern fleet without regard to the qualitative limitations laid down in the London Naval Treaty. In reality the limitation upon the Soviet Union was not much smaller than limitations imposed upon themselves by the other signatories to the London Naval Treaty. For, as soon as Japan proceeded to build more powerful capital ships than were permitted by the London Naval Treaty, Great Britain, the United States and France would be forced to resort to Article 25 of the London Treaty ("Safeguarding Clause").<sup>8</sup> It was true that this Article 25 provided for a three months' interim period during which the signatories would proceed to an exchange of views. Warships which exceeded the limits prescribed in the London Treaty could, technically speaking, scarcely be laid down without a three months' preparatory period, so that this interim period did not constitute a serious disadvantage for the other maritime Powers. On the other hand the three months' period had the advantage that one could first ascertain whether Japan had in fact laid down vessels exceeding the limits of the London Treaty and furthermore that one could—should there be doubts as to the accuracy of the Russian representations—point out in Moscow that the pre-conditions for departing from the London Naval Treaty did not exist. The Russian reservation, moreover, only concerned units of the Far Eastern fleet and was less far-reaching than Article 25 of the London Naval Treaty, in so far as a Japanese action would not allow Russia to claim the right to build units of her European fleet, too, beyond the limits laid down in the London Treaty.<sup>9</sup>

As far as the *tempo of Russian naval rearmament* was concerned, the British side could naturally give no guarantee that this expansion would not be speeded up in future. The British had information that Russia had constructed substantial submarine forces. But they doubted whether the Russian Government would also be able rapidly to complete larger warships, as since the war Russia had not been able to acquire any experience in the construction of such vessels.<sup>10</sup> When it was objected that Russia could, after all, have such vessels built abroad and that according to information available to us this was already being done in one European country, Sir Robert Craigie observed that some little while ago the German side had named Italy to him as being the supplier of Russian warships. The British side possessed no such

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<sup>8</sup> The words in quotation marks are in English in the original.

<sup>9</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "That, however, is still very doubtful."

<sup>10</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "With Italy's help."

information. On the contrary they very much doubted<sup>11</sup> whether Russia would have placed orders for warships in Italy, of all places. On this Captain Phillips merely remarked that the Admiralty had no information on this point.<sup>12</sup> In reply to a question from Rear Admiral Wassner, the British delegates said that at the present time no naval vessels were being built for Russia in Britain<sup>13</sup> though private firms had received Russian enquiries regarding shipbuilding. During the negotiations with the Soviet Russians it had been proposed to them that they should order 6-inch guns in Britain to equip the cruisers that Russia was claiming, in order to induce Russia not to insist on the 7.1-inch guns which the Russians had hitherto been constructing. But Russia had not accepted this suggestion.

Sir Robert Craigie then dealt in detail with *the German reservations*.

*Reservation No. 1 aa*

The British Government recognized in principle the justice of the German *Reservation 1 aa* and hoped to get the Soviet Russians to agree to Germany being informed as soon as they departed from the provisions of the London Treaty.

*Reservation No. 1 bb*

In respect of the formulation of *Reservation 1 bb*, the British Government propose in place of: "The German Government shall then receive the right . . ." to substitute "The German Government shall then have the right . . .". This amendment of the text would make it clear that the paragraph 1 bb was merely a gloss on Article 25 of the London Treaty.

*Reservation No. 1 cc*

The German *Reservation 1 cc* would, in the British view, mean in practice that Article 25 of the London Treaty would be invalidated. Although, as he had already said, one might hope to restrict to the Far East any departure from the limitations of the London Treaty and could try during the three months' interim period to exert pressure on Russia in order to prevent a departure from the London Treaty, yet it was clear that as soon as one Power in Europe dispensed with the three months' interim period, the remaining European Naval Powers would seek to do the same. Thus any prospects for consultation would be destroyed from the start. It was therefore proposed to delete this item.

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<sup>11</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "We know about this; besides there are Ital[ian] engineers in Petersburg."

<sup>12</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "But we do have."

<sup>13</sup> See also document No. 486, footnotes 4 and 5.

*Reservation No. 2*

On *Reservation No. 2* in the German Note, Sir Robert Craigie observed that it was only with the greatest difficulty that Russia had been induced to limit to two the number of her capital ships armed with over 14-inch guns. Nor had it so far been possible to induce Russia to undertake to arm these two capital ships with nothing of greater calibre than 15-inch. The Russian Government had pointed out that Germany, France and Italy each possessed or were building two capital ships with a 15-inch calibre, and that Japan, the United States and Britain possessed a number of capital ships with 16-inch guns. In reply to this, it had been pointed out that Russia, in arming her ships with new 16-inch guns, would acquire a decisive superiority over the, at present, already over-age capital ships possessed by Britain, the United States and Japan. It was hoped to induce Russia to reduce her claims and at least to accept an upper limit of 15-inches for these two capital ships. In the British view this objective could be achieved if *Germany were to state that she agreed only to arm two of her capital ships with 15-inch [guns] on condition that the two Russian capital ships in question were not armed with any higher calibre either.*

The question of calibre for the capital ships was of the greatest importance. The United States, after long opposition, had stated that they would be prepared in future to arm capital ships with 14-inch guns only, provided the other Naval Powers would do the same for the duration of the Treaty. But, should the 14-inch limit fail, then the United States would insist on the maximum calibre of 16-inch. On technical grounds they were refusing a limitation to 15-inch. Now, experience had shown that, technically speaking, capital ships of 35,000 tons could only with great difficulty be equipped with 16-inch guns. There was therefore great danger that should the maximum calibre of 16-inch be retained, the maximum tonnage for capital ships would be put up to 40,000 tons or more. It was known that the limitation of gun calibres to 14-inch was, under the London Treaty, dependent on Japan's consent. He could say in confidence that Japan favoured limitation to 14-inch, but that for prestige reasons she did not wish to undertake any treaty obligations. There was, however, reason to hope that Japan would give satisfactory assurances on this matter. A request to this effect had now been made to Japan but no answer had yet been received. It was hoped that Japan too would make acceptance of a maximum calibre of 15-inch dependent on Russia's arming the two capital ships in question with a maximum calibre of 15-inch only and would for the remainder confine herself to 14-inch. France and the United States had also declared themselves in agreement with this.



*Reservation No. 3*

In respect of the German *Reservation No. 3*, Sir Robert Craigie said that only after four months of negotiation had they succeeded in inducing the Russians to reduce the originally intended number of ten cruisers which were to have had a tonnage of 10,000 tons, to seven cruisers with a maximum tonnage of 8,000 tons. He particularly stressed this limitation of the maximum tonnage to 8,000 tons. The Russian Minister of Defence had very strongly resisted this reduction and had, as he [Craigie] could tell us in confidence, finally been overruled by the political authorities. The reduction of the number of cruisers to seven, each of 8,000 tons, and the acceptance of the building holiday by France, had, however, expressly been made dependent on Germany's not building more than three 'A'-class cruisers. Should Germany lay down the fourth and fifth 'A'-class cruiser, Russia would eagerly make use of this opportunity of returning to her intention of constructing at least ten cruisers of 10,000 tons each, and France would likewise insist on her previous plan, which was already contained in her naval estimates for 1922, of building nine 'A'-class cruisers in all. Italy would follow suit and that would be the end of the building holiday for 'A'-class cruisers. The familiar arguments were deployed to counter these remarks and Rear Admiral Wassner stressed that the Soviet Union alone would be to blame for this failure.

During the course of their observations, Sir Robert Craigie and Captain Phillips repeatedly emphasized that, on the basis of the previous provisions, it must certainly be acknowledged that Germany had the right to construct the 'A'-class cruisers. He nevertheless proposed the following *revision of Reservation No. 3*: "In view of the fact that the Soviet Union is constructing seven cruisers of sub-category 'A', of which several are to be laid down during the duration of this Agreement, the German Government reserve the right to continue constructing 'A'-class cruisers even after the entry into force of the new Agreement. As soon as the German Government deem it necessary to make use of this right, they will inform His Britannic Majesty's Government of the fact."

In reply, Rear Admiral Wassner again plainly stated, *inter alia*, that should the Russians fail to observe the building holiday for 'A'-class cruisers, Germany intended to lay down a fourth and fifth 'A'-class cruiser. The British side had themselves at one time proposed a reservation to this effect. During the next few days the British Government would be informed by the German Government of the laying down of two further 10,000 ton cruisers. This communication would point out that the category and calibre of these cruisers would depend on whether it proved possible to induce Russia to accept the building holiday. In any case it was hard to see why the other maritime Powers could not reconcile themselves to the construction of the



five 'A'-class cruisers to which Germany was entitled. Even so, France, and possibly Russia too, would each possess seven cruisers. He therefore asked that the British Government should exert their influence in order to get the Russians to relinquish their plan or at least to get the other maritime Powers to abide by the building holiday, even if Germany should lay down the remaining two 'A'-class cruisers due to her in any case.

Sir Robert Craigie said he was prepared to consult with the Russians and the French in this sense, but he must point out at once that he himself was perfectly certain that the reply would be in the negative. It was true that at present the Russians had only been producing the 7.1-inch guns. The 6-inch guns had last been constructed before the war and it would now certainly take two years before Russia was able to produce a gun of this kind. Russia was not prepared to delay the construction of her cruisers that long. It had been extremely difficult to get the Russians to take part in any qualitative treaty at all. They would now be more than ready to seize on any pretext for keeping out of these commitments. Furthermore, the Soviet Union had already laid down three or four cruisers of 8,000 tons with 7.1-inch guns.<sup>14</sup>

Hereupon Rear Admiral Wassner again stated that in that case the blame for a failure of the building holiday would be Russia's alone. He hoped that Britain would succeed in convincing the other maritime Powers that Germany's cruiser construction was justified and in restraining them from further exorbitant building plans. Sir Robert Craigie stated that he thought that, in any further discussion with Russia, the *whole complex* of technical questions should be dealt with, and he therefore asked for the German Government's views beforehand on the proposed amendments to Reservations 1 bb, cc, 2 and 3.

#### *Reservation No. 4*

With regard to *Reservation No. 4*, Sir Robert Craigie said that this did not make it clear whether Germany intended to agree to an exchange of information with the Soviet Union. If this were not the intention, the British side could not quite see why Germany refused a confidential exchange of information with Britain, in view of the friendly relations existing between the two countries, particularly in the naval sphere. He requested us to consider withdrawing the Reservation if Russia could be induced to include, if not the auxiliary vessels, at least the "minor war vessels" in the exchange of information. Rear Admiral Wassner said that the German Reservation had been made partly for reasons of equality of rights and partly because Germany could not recognize the justice of the Russian objections to the exchange of

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<sup>14</sup> Marginal note in Guse's handwriting: "Aha, so they have after all!"

information in respect of these categories of vessels. But he would report the British suggestion.

Sir Robert Craigie then proposed incorporating the arrangement as envisaged in Point 13 of the British Memorandum of July 22, 1936, in the additional protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of June 18, 1935, as the British side were concerned to keep the protocol to the qualitative treaty as brief as possible.

In reply to a question, Sir Robert Craigie said that so far no agreement had been initialled with the Soviet Union. They were in the course of recasting in treaty form the document communicated to us concerning the results of the Anglo-Russian conversations.

The conversation, which took place in a friendly atmosphere and during which the British delegates were obviously at pains to take the German views, as communicated both in writing and orally, fully into account, was hereupon broken off.

The British side propose to prepare fresh drafts for a bilateral qualitative treaty with protocol, as well as an additional protocol to the German-British Naval Agreement of 1935, covering the ground on which agreement with us has been reached. An early reply is awaited from the German Government with regard to those *reservations* set out in our Memorandum, upon which the British side have made counter proposals which are detailed above. Sir Robert Craigie will then again get in touch with the Soviet representatives, and he promised to set forth with all emphasis our view both in the question of the gun calibre of the capital ships and also in respect of the 'A'-class cruiser question. But he said he could hardly believe that his efforts in respect of the 'A'-class cruisers would meet with any success.

### No. 639

1723/399812-20

#### *The Consul General in Danzig to the Foreign Ministry*

IG 1369

DANZIG, October 31, 1936.

Received October 31.

Pol. V 4936.

Subject: Performance of the task assigned to Poland by the Council of the League of Nations in the Danzig question.

With reference to your despatch Pol. V. 4715 of October 28, 1936.<sup>1</sup>

I have informed the Director of the Foreign Department of the Senate, in confidence, that the Embassies in London and Rome, the Legations at The Hague, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Oslo and Helsinki, and also the Consulate at Geneva, have been asked to name persons

<sup>1</sup> Document No. 630.

who appear suitable for the post of successor to Lester. The Senate has at present no proposals of its own to make in this matter. I will, if necessary, venture to return to this question.

The Senate is of the opinion that by "discussions between competent departmental officials" President Greiser meant a discussion between the competent officials of the two countries amongst themselves, and not inter-State consultation.<sup>2</sup> In the Senate's view, the entire negotiation, which can deal only with Danzig and the League, would get on to the wrong track if discussions were now to take place between the competent officials of Danzig and Poland about, say, the Danzig-Polish relationship.

The Polish *démarche*<sup>2</sup> is not to be answered until President Greiser's return. In the Senate's opinion further discussions would only be possible after that. The Senate, for its part, attaches the very greatest importance to the closest liaison with the Foreign Ministry in the whole treatment of the matter.

It will therefore make a point of keeping the Foreign Ministry informed constantly and in good time about the situation.

It has not been possible to ascertain to what public appearances and speeches by leading elements of the Senate and the Party in Danzig M. Papée refers in paragraph 5 of his Memorandum of October 24 of this year.<sup>2</sup> In all the speeches that have recently been made by the President of the Senate and the Gauleiter it has always been stressed that Danzig does not intend to curtail the rights at present enjoyed by Poland in Danzig. It is true that it has been stated that Poland must refrain from interfering in the internal affairs of Danzig; this has indeed been accepted by the Polish side. No particular animus against Poland has been displayed in any of these speeches. In the opinion of the Senate, Poland is trying to represent the atmosphere as poisoned, in order to strengthen her own position.

To this I would add in confidence that Gauleiter Forster expressly assured me in a conversation I had with him today that he had never said in a public<sup>3</sup> speech that not only the League of Nations, but Poland too, must be driven out of Danzig. On the contrary, in his recent speeches, which he had, admittedly, always given impromptu and without any notes, he had consistently pointed out that Poland's rights in Danzig were not to be curtailed, but that there was no question of granting her new rights since there was nothing to justify this. I would further mention in confidence that Gauleiter Forster told me that he would be sending a report to the Foreign Minister, which he would forward through the Consulate General.

I venture to enclose a copy of a memorandum by the Senate on the

<sup>2</sup> See document No. 628, enclosure 2.

<sup>3</sup> The word "public" is underlined in Neurath's crayon and a marginal note in his handwriting against this sentence reads: "But before 400 Party members."



Danzig-League of Nations-Poland situation, from which the Senate's attitude and the intended treatment of the conversations with Poland are clearly apparent.

RADOWITZ

[Enclosure]

Copy

DANZIG, October 31, 1936.

# MEMORANDUM ON THE DANZIG-LEAGUE OF NATIONS-POLAND SITUATION

I. In July 1936 Danzig stated<sup>4</sup> that it would no longer allow interference in its domestic affairs, that the League of Nations Commissioner Lester must be removed, and finally that it would be best if no new High Commissioner were appointed at all.

II. In September 1936 the *League of Nations* caused High Commissioner Lester to be recalled.<sup>5</sup> It felt—particularly on account of Germany—too weak to intervene itself and at once in the domestic affairs of Danzig, and charged Poland to make proposals as to how some sort of an accommodation could be arrived at with Danzig. The weakness of the League was made particularly apparent by Mr. Eden's behaviour towards the Danzig representative at Geneva.<sup>6</sup> Mr. Eden attempted by every possible means to retain, in Geneva, the Danzig delegate, who had been instructed to depart once the affair of the warships visit had been settled only in order to tell him, in the end, that Lester was to be recalled, all this in the hope of getting into negotiation with Danzig as a result of this concession by the League Council.

III. In practice, the High Commissioner and the League of Nations are at present excluded from the domestic affairs of Danzig. The League by itself is not strong enough to do anything about this. In the last resort the League always accepts *faits accomplis*. If in the present situation elections with a two-thirds majority were possible,<sup>7</sup> the relationship of Danzig to the League would be perfectly clear.

IV. Since January 1936, *Poland* has deliberately intervened in Danzig affairs, and in January, July and September she intentionally complicated the situation. She is playing a completely dishonest game. As early as January, just as in July and September, it was only at her instigation—or in September principally at her own instigation—

<sup>4</sup> The reference is to statements made by Greiser in his speech at Geneva on July 4; see document No. 430, footnote 1, and 434.

<sup>5</sup> See document No. 566, footnote 1.

<sup>6</sup> i.e., Staatsrat Böttcher; see document No. 524.

<sup>7</sup> Under the provisions of the Danzig constitution a two-thirds majority in the Senate was necessary for the enactment of constitutional changes. At the elections of April 1935 the NSDAP had polled nearly 59 per cent of the total vote (see vol. IV of this Series, document No. 80, footnote 3).



that she was entrusted with special tasks in Danzig matters.<sup>8</sup> Poland's perfidy became apparent especially in September. I would recall that Minister Beck represented it as being fairly certain that the Council would only require Danzig to make a statement about its new decrees and that Danzig would be given time to answer this question. There was not a word about Poland's having a special rôle assigned to her in the Council's resolution. In reality, Minister Beck did everything possible to be assigned a special task in Danzig. He repeatedly gave assurances that his relations with President Greiser were particularly good. Now he is trying to discredit him directly and openly in Germany's eyes and is also increasingly causing British, Swiss, French and Polish newspapers to agitate against him.

Instead of the advantages which the step that has been taken, partly at Germany's instance, was to produce for Danzig, Poland is seeking to exploit it to strengthen her own position. She is speaking, without having the slightest occasion to do so, of a threat to her political rights, of severe infringements of the rights of the Poles and the Polish minority in Danzig, of a threat to economic and commercial relations, of newly created *faits accomplis*, of threatening speeches by leading Danzig politicians, etc. Poland is therefore trying not only to make out to the League of Nations that there is an increasingly threatening atmosphere in Danzig, though this simply does not exist, in order fundamentally to strengthen her own political and economic position in Danzig, but at the same time to appear in Danzig as a guardian angel, to pocket the encomiums of the League of Nations (Britain and France) for her brilliantly executed rôle of mediator, and to give these two nations the impression that without Poland a peaceful agreement in the East is no longer possible (increased political influence for Poland in European politics).

V. *Poland* is working to ensure that, after achieving her new position in Danzig, she can present the League Council with President Greiser's head on a charger, then have a new High Commissioner elected, and thereupon perhaps fix things up so that the League no longer concerns itself overmuch with the domestic affairs of Danzig but continues to charge Poland to keep Danzig under supervision and to place her well-tried assistance at the disposal of the new Commissioner too. Nor is it even certain yet whether Poland does not wish, nevertheless, to have the internal political affairs of Danzig brought before a committee of jurists and to have the conduct of the Government and the Party leaders severely censured.

VI. Thus, from the Polish point of view, the result of the Danzig action in July would be: Let the Danzigers go on muddling along with a semi-authoritarian State. We Poles have secured a firmer foothold

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<sup>8</sup> See document No. 573, footnote 3.

there than ever. We need only to threaten and we will get more than we had before. Whilst Danzig wanted to weaken the influence of the League and to strengthen that of Germany, we Poles have seen to it that not only do we—as we have already done to some extent—ourselves conduct with the League of Nations all the business that Danzig previously conducted herself, but also that in reality the influence of Germany is more than ever excluded.

VII. In fact, however, the situation is as follows: Danzig has at present achieved what it wanted. If it resolutely adheres to its point of view, and possibly further justifies and maintains the constitutional nature of its measures, that is to say, if it moves further away from the political line, perhaps, and takes its stand on the legal one, the League of Nations will not, in my opinion, be able to do anything except possibly consult the jurists.

It is the case that it is only domestic affairs in Danzig which have hitherto been dealt with. Poland and her rights have not suffered a single scratch, and therefore she has nothing to complain of. The reply to the Polish *démarche* must, therefore, take this into account. If Danzig gives Poland even *one* new right, it will be doing something for which there is not the slightest cause. Poland would then know that she only needed to create the atmosphere she wanted and to utter words like “upheaval”, “strain”, and “seriousness of the situation”, for any action by Danzig and Germany to collapse like a house of cards. It is not our mission at present to save Poland’s prestige with the League, much less the prestige of the League itself.

VIII. The reply to the Polish Note of October 24, 1936, cannot therefore have any but the following content: We are very willing to talk to Poland about Danzig and the League of Nations, but only about that and not about Poland and Danzig. This has nothing to do with the present situation. The Polish Note has steered the matter into quite the wrong channel.

If Poland needs Germany even only very slightly, she will doubtless back down of her own accord from the tough attitude she has taken. After that we shall be able to see how the situation can be exploited. It would be best if the negotiations could be protracted beyond January. It must, however, be constantly emphasized that this is a question of Danzig and the *League* and *not* of Danzig and *Poland*. Danzig and Germany must not on any account allow themselves to be deflected from this line.

Poland’s adroit policy, however, already seems to have ensured that the essentially domestic Danzig question is now becoming a Danzig-Polish question. If the intention is to put up with the Polish method of conducting negotiations, then last July’s step, to which Germany after all agreed,<sup>9</sup> ought not to have been taken at all.

<sup>9</sup> See documents Nos. 429 and 434.

IX. The negotiations with Poland should in any case go as follows:

1) The internal situation in Danzig does not concern Poland.  
 2) Poland's rights *are* completely safeguarded. We would willingly give another assurance in this respect.

3) Under *no* circumstances will Poland receive any new rights.

4) We are not dealing with Poland but with the League of Nations.

5) Poland has been appointed as mediator by the League of Nations.

But it is a special concession on the part of Danzig to acquiesce in this rôle of Poland's in spite of the fact that Danzig could equally well sort things out with the League herself. That she does not wish to spoil Poland's rôle as mediator and thus damage her prestige is the measure of Danzig's conciliatoriness.

6) Neither the High Commissioner nor the League has any business—in Danzig's opinion not even from the purely legal point of view—with our domestic affairs.

7) Since the League has made a concession to us and has recalled Lester, we too could make some concession to the League. We could furnish it with a statement of the legal case for our measures drawn up by internationally recognized jurists appointed by us (or perhaps by two jurists nominated by us and one nominated by the League of Nations).

8) We agree to a new High Commissioner who will content himself with the situation as existing in January and not concern himself with the domestic affairs of Danzig.

Whether, in addition, Poland's influence in Danzig could, conversely, be weakened and Germany's direct influence strengthened, will depend on Germany.<sup>10</sup>

[DR. BÖTTCHER]<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> In telegram No. 27 of Nov. 8 (1723/399823) Weizsäcker asked the Consulate General in Danzig for their views on the memorandum here printed, particularly as to whether the Danzig-Polish negotiations should be protracted or had best be brought to a speedy conclusion; he also suggested that the Danzig Senate should prepare a draft reply to the Polish Note of Oct. 24 and submit it to the Foreign Ministry. Radowitz's report IG 1438 of Nov. 12, with which he enclosed a preliminary draft of the Danzig reply, is not printed (1723/399898-901). See also vol. VI of this Series.

<sup>11</sup> The document here printed is unsigned; the signature is taken from another copy, dated Oct. 30 (1723/399880-85), which was sent by Böttcher to Counsellor Bergmann of Political Division V under cover of a letter of Nov. 2 (1723/399879) which reads: "I enclose a memorandum which I prepared for President Greiser on the relationship Danzig-League of Nations-Poland. He has written to me that he deems it to be accurate and approves all its points, and requested that it be transmitted at once to the Foreign Ministry. I request you also to show it to Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff and Freiherr von Waitzäcker [*sic*]. The German Consulate General has also received a copy."

## APPENDICES





## Appendix I

### ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY

The table printed below lists the departments and officials of the Foreign Ministry after the reorganization which came into effect on May 15, 1936. This affected primarily the geographical departments (Departments II and III) and the Economic Department (Sonderreferat W),<sup>1</sup> the former being consolidated into a Political Department and relinquishing such economic matters as they still handled to the newly-formed and expanded Economic Policy Department.<sup>2</sup> For the organization of the Foreign Ministry as of March 1936, see Volume IV of this Series, Appendix II.

On June 21, 1936, after State Secretary Bülow's death, the Director of the Political Department, Ministerialdirektor Dieckhoff, assumed the functions of State Secretary and was officially appointed Acting State Secretary on August 17, 1936. On the same date Freiherr von Weizsäcker was appointed Acting Director of the Political Department.

### ORGANIZATION OF THE GERMAN FOREIGN MINISTRY SEPTEMBER 1936<sup>3</sup>

THE REICH FOREIGN MINISTER  
Freiherr von Neurath

*Attached:* Senior Counsellor von Kotze

*Secretariat:* Secretary of Legation Dr. von Etdorf

THE STATE SECRETARY OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY  
Acting: Ministerialdirektor Dr. Dieckhoff

*Secretariat:* Counsellor Dr. von Bargaen

#### PROTOCOL

Senior Counsellor Minister von Bülow-Schwante  
Counsellor of Legation Dr. Mey  
Secretary of Legation Ritter von Reichert

#### INTERNAL GERMAN AFFAIRS (REFERAT DEUTSCHLAND)

Senior Counsellor Minister von Bülow-Schwante  
Counsellor Dr. Hinrichs  
Counsellor Dr. Schumburg

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<sup>1</sup> See vol. III of this Series, Appendix II, and footnote 5 thereto.

<sup>2</sup> The relevant directive by Neurath of Apr. 30, 1936, is not printed (1780/406789-97); a few minor changes in organization took place between May and September 1936.

<sup>3</sup> Translated and condensed from a Foreign Ministry organization plan of September 1936 (1780/406764-78).

## PERSONNEL AND BUDGET DEPARTMENT (PERS.)

Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Prüfer
Deputy Director:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Dienstmann
Head of budget and financial affairs:	Senior Counsellor Schellert
Special duties:	Senior Counsellor (unassigned) Schroetter
Pers. H      Organization of the foreign service, personal data of higher officials etc.:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Mayr Counsellor Ramm
Pers. M      Personal data on other officials, organization and efficiency of the working of the Ministry:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Schmidt-Rolke
Pers. R      Preparation and general administration of the budget, and general questions relating thereto:	Secretary of Legation Schroeder Senior Counsellor Kammler Counsellor Rieger
Pers. B      Salaries and allowances:	Senior Consul (unassigned) Reinhardt
Pers. D      Administration of funds for official requirements:	Counsellor Dr. Bischof Senior Counsellor Dr. Hempel Counsellor Dr. von Pannwitz Vice Consul Dr. Schwarz (Werner) Consul (unassigned) Dr. Bergfeld
Inspector of accounts:	Senior Counsellor Kammler
Library:	Dr. Holleck-Weithmann
Political archives:	Dr. Frauendienst Dr. Ullrich (Joh.)
Cipher and communications:	Oberregierungsrat Selchow
Language services:	Oberregierungsrat Gautier Counsellor Dr. Schmidt (Paul)

## POLITICAL DEPARTMENT (POL.)

Acting Director of Department:	Minister Freiherr von Weizsäcker
Attached to the Director of the Political Department:	
The Delegate to the International River Commissions:	Senior Counsellor Minister Dr. Martius

## A. EUROPEAN SECTION

Head: Minister Dr. Woermann

Pol. I      League of Nations, military questions, armaments, aviation, national defence:	Senior Counsellor von Kamp-hoevener Counsellor Dr. von Schmieden Counsellor Schultz-Sponholz Secretary of Legation Dr. Freiherr von der Heyden-Rynsch Secretary of Legation Dr. Freiherr von Dörnberg
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Pol. II	Western Europe (Great Britain, Ireland, British possessions—unless dealt with elsewhere—France (North Africa, Morocco, Tunis), Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Luxemburg):	Counsellor von Rintelen Secretary of Legation Dr. Henle Secretary of Legation Dr. Hertz
Pol. III	Southern Europe (Spain, Portugal, Vatican):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Dumont
Pol. IV	South East Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Libya, Yugoslavia, Austria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Heinburg Counsellor Dr. Busse Counsellor Dr. Lorenz Counsellor of Legation Dr. Altenburg
Pol. V	Eastern Europe: (a) Poland, Danzig:	Senior Counsellor von Lieres und Wilkau Counsellor Bergmann Secretary of Legation Dr. von Grolman
	(b) Soviet Union:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Schliep
Pol. VI	Scandinavia and Baltic States (Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Iceland, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Memel Territory):	Senior Counsellor Dr. von Grundherr Secretary of Legation Dr. Doertenbach

## B. EXTRA-EUROPEAN SECTION

Head: Minister Dr. von Erdmannsdorff

Pol. VII	Orient (Egypt, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Arabia, Ceylon, Cyprus, Palestine, South Africa, Syria, Turkey, India, Iraq, Iran, Sudan):	Senior Counsellor Pilger Dr. Schlobies
Pol. VIII	East Asia and Australia (Japan, Japanese mandated territories, China, Manchukuo, Mongolia, French Indochina, Siam, Straits Settlements, Malay States, Netherlands East Indies, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, South Sea territories):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Rohde Minister Balser
Pol. IX	America: (a) North America (United States with possessions, except Philippines; Canada): (b) Central and South America, Cuba, Haiti, Dominican Republic:	Senior Counsellor Leitner  Senior Counsellor Dr. Poensgen Secretary of Legation Dr. Anderson



Pol. X	Colonial questions; Africa, except Union of South Africa; colonial policy:	Senior Counsellor Gunzert Counsellor Dr. Seger
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## ECONOMIC POLICY DEPARTMENT (W)

Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Ritter	
Attached:	Vice Consul Lachmann	
Deputy Director:	Senior Counsellor Benzler	
Directly subordinate to Director of Department:		
Leader of delegation for negotiation of commercial treaties:	Counsellor of Embassy Dr. Hemmen	
W I	General section for questions concerning economics and finance:	Counsellor of Legation Dr. Knoll Secretary of Legation Dr. Freiherr von Maltzan
W II	Western and Southern Europe except Great Britain and Italy) (France, including colonies, protectorates, and mandated territories, Portugal, including colonies, Spain, including colonies:	Senior Counsellor Sabath
	Belgium, including colonies and mandated territories, Luxemburg, Netherlands, including colonies, Switzerland):	Counsellor Dr. Wingen
W III	South East Europe with Italy and Near East (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy with colonies, Yugoslavia, Austria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Afghanistan, Egypt, Arabia, Ethiopia, Cyprus, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Sudan, Turkey):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Clodius Consul (unassigned) Kalisch
W IV	Eastern Europe (Danzig, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Memel, Poland, Soviet Russia):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Schnurre
W V	Northern Europe (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden); also monopolies questions:	Secretary of Legation Dr. van Scherpenberg
W VI	Great Britain, Dominions and British possessions except Canada (Australia, Ceylon, Great Britain, British India, Ireland, New Zealand, South Africa):	Senior Counsellor Rüter Consul General Bene Secretary of Legation Dr. Weber

W VII	East Asia (China, Japan, Manchukuo, Siam):	Counsellor Dr. Voss
W VIII	America:	
	(a) North America including Canada and Mexico (Canada, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Liberia, Mexico, United States, also trade promotion):	Senior Counsellor Dr. Davidsen Vice Consul Krienon
	(b) South America including Central America (Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Salvador, Uruguay, Venezuela):	Counsellor of Legation Fricke Secretary of Legation Dr. Maciejewski
W IX	Shipping:	Senior Counsellor Bleyert
W X	Reich Office for Foreign Trade (economic news and information service; chambers of commerce abroad):	Senior Counsellor (unassigned) Dr. Bosenick

## LEGAL DEPARTMENT (R)

	Director of Department:	Ministerialdirektor Dr. Gaus
	Deputy Director:	Senior Counsellor Dr. Barandon
R I	International law, arbitration questions etc.:	Senior Counsellor Albrecht
R II	Trade treaties and concessions; extra-territorial rights. International traffic law; settlement of questions concerning German property in former enemy countries; consular law; taxation laws etc.:	Counsellor Busch
R III	Constitutional and administrative law; nationality. Ecclesiastical law; extradition; penal law etc.:	Senior Counsellor Siedler
R IV	Compulsory military service; compulsory labour service etc.:	Consul (unassigned) Dr. Sethe
R V	Labour law; International Labour Office; Police, particularly aliens section; international motor vehicle law; Universal Postal Union etc.:	Counsellor Rödiger Consul (unassigned) Henkel
R VI	Consular jurisdiction in matters of civil law and lawsuits; international legal protection and legal aid in civil matters; international private law etc.:	Secretary of Legation von Haeften

CULTURAL POLICY DEPARTMENT (KULT.)<sup>4</sup>

Director of Department:	Minister Dr. Stieve
Deputy Director:	Senior Counsellor Dr. von Twardowski
Kult. A	German communities abroad; minorities questions; Church and mission affairs etc.:
	Senior Counsellor Langmann
	Secretary of Legation Dr. von Fries
	Dr. Goeken
Kult. B	Economic questions relating to ethnic communities etc.:
	Counsellor Dr. Schwager
Kult. E	Emigration and repatriation; settling abroad; German community in Russia; inquiries abroad about Reich Germans and foreign nationals etc.:
	Counsellor Dr. Kundt
Kult. W	General cultural policy; scientific relations with foreign countries etc.:
	Counsellor Dr. Roth
	Secretary of Legation von Stolzmann
	Secretary of Legation Dr. Gregor
Kult. S	German educational system abroad; youth movements etc.:
	Senior Counsellor Dr. Böhme
	Consul Dr. Holm
	Consul Dopffel
	Dr. Paul
Kult. H	Administration of funds of department:
	Counsellor Dr. Roth

## PRESS DEPARTMENT (P)

Director of Department:	Minister Aschmann
Deputy Director:	Counsellor Wolf
South East Europe (Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Yugoslavia, Austria, Rumania, Czechoslovakia, Hungary); German minorities:	Counsellor Wolf
Western Europe—except Netherlands and Switzerland (Belgium and colonies, France and colonies, Italy, Luxemburg, Morocco, Vatican, League of Nations), also <i>Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz</i> :	Counsellor Braun von Stumm
Eastern Europe and Near East (Baltic States—Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania—Danzig, Poland, Soviet Russia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Iraq, Iran, Palestine, Syria, Turkey):	Consul (unassigned) Dr. Schönborg
Great Britain and Dominions, protectorates and colonies, Portugal, Spain, United States of America, Central and South America:	Secretary of Legation von Stempel
Scandinavia (Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland):	Secretary of Legation Dr. Schlemann
Far East, also Netherlands and Switzerland (China, Japan, Siam, India, Netherlands Indies, Netherlands, Switzerland); foreign exchange matters:	Senior Counsellor (unassigned) Dr. Katzenberger
Reporting on the press:	Dr. Schacht

<sup>4</sup> See also Editors' Note, p. 610.

## Appendix II

### LIST OF GERMAN FILES USED

The following table identifies the German file from which each document has been derived. The documents of the Foreign Ministry were bound into volumes by the Germans. As documents in these volumes have been microfilmed, each film of a file has been identified by a film serial number, while each page of the documents has been identified by a frame number stamped on the original at the time of filming. The documents published in this collection are identified by the film serial number and frame numbers in the upper left-hand corner of each document. By reference to the following table of film serial numbers the location in the German Foreign Ministry archives of the copy of the document used in this publication may be determined. In some few cases separate files, usually on closely related topics, have been filmed consecutively under a single serial number; these are marked with an asterisk(\*). A number of serials are given as supplementary to earlier ones; these are cases where re-examination of the file in question indicated that additional filming might be useful to scholars or, as is more often the case, where in the process of editing for publication the editors wished to provide a film record of documents of lesser importance to which references appeared in the documents selected. The files of the Reich Chancellery, the Reich Foreign Minister and the State Secretary are each in two collections (cf. vol. I of this Series, Appendix V, items 13, 14, 50, 52, 166 and 167) which are not divided by a clear-cut date line and of which the files on certain topics in this volume overlap. In order to identify the collection from which any particular document has been taken, the earlier collection has in each case been marked [I] and the later one [II].

#### *Film Serial Numbers*

#### *Title of File*

- |      |   |
|------|---|
| C 79 | Reich Chancellery: Great Britain.   |
| 33   | Under State Secretary: Visit of Count Ciano, 1936.  |
| 43   | Dienststelle Ribbentrop: Confidential Reports.  |
| 47   | Pol. geheim: Spain—Political Affairs.   |
| 63   | State Secretary [II]: Reoccupation of the Demilitarized Rhineland Zone.   |
| 97   | State Secretary [II]: Danzig.   |
| 115  | Reich Foreign Minister [II]: Liechtenstein; Lithuania; Latvia; Luxemburg; Memel; Austria.*  |
| 116  | Reich Foreign Minister [II]: Africa; Albania; Danzig; Estonia; Croatia.*  |
| 141  | State Secretary [II]: Belgium.  |
| 147  | Reich Foreign Minister [II]: Poland; Conflict with Poland; Poland/Danzig.*  |
| 218  | Economic Policy Department: Treaties—China: Klein's Projects.   |
| 348  | State Secretary [II]: Visit of Italian Foreign Minister Ciano to Berlin, 1936; Material for Führer's Visit to Rome, 1938; Visit of Führer to Rome, 1938.* |
| 387  | State Secretary [II]: Political Correspondence with Officials of the Foreign Service, vol. 1.   |



*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- |      |  |
|------|--|
| 392  | State Secretary [II]: Political Correspondence with Officials of the Foreign Service, vol. 2.  |
| 393  | Pol. V: Political Relations of Russia with Germany.  |
| 395  | State Secretary [II]: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.  |
| 408  | State Secretary [II]: Western Pact.  |
| 517  | Pol. geheim: Russia—Political Affairs.   |
| 605  | Pol. II: France—General Foreign Policy.  |
| 621  | Pol. II: Political Relations of France with Germany.   |
| 631  | Pol. II: Political Relations of France with Poland.  |
| 635  | Pol. II: Political Relations of France with Russia.  |
| 654  | Pol. III: Spain—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.                                     |
| 753  | Pol. II: France—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.                                     |
| 769  | Department II F Secret: Demilitarized Zone.  |
| 939  | Reich Foreign Minister [II]: Union of South Africa.  |
| 1159 | Pol. II: Political Relations of Belgium with Germany.  |
| 1160 | Pol. II: Belgium—General Foreign Policy.   |
| 1224 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Rumania.                                       |
| 1231 | Reich Minister Frank—Personal Files.   |
| 1425 | German Legation in Belgium—Secret Papers.  |
| 1427 | Pol. II: Relations of Great Britain with Germany, vol. 1.                                      |
| 1486 | Pol. IV: Italy—General Foreign Policy.   |
| 1437 | Pol. II: Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany, vol. 2.                            |
| 1499 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Italy with Germany.  |
| 1528 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Italy with Yugoslavia.   |
| 1549 | Reich Chancellery [II]: Austria.   |
| 1584 | Reich Chancellery [II]: Netherlands.   |
| 1594 | Pol. VII: Turkey—General Foreign Policy.   |
| 1613 | Pol. geheim: Czechoslovakia—Political Affairs.   |
| 1622 | Pol. I M: Anglo-German Naval Negotiations.   |
| 1627 | Pol. VII: International Problems—Montreux Conference, vol. 1.                                  |
| 1638 | Pol. VII: International Problems—Montreux Conference, vol. 2.                                  |
| 1650 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Rumania with Russia, vol. 1.                                   |
| 1652 | Pol. VII: International Problems—Montreux Conference, vol. 3.                                  |
| 1675 | Pol. V: Danzig—General Foreign Policy; Political Relations of Danzig with Germany.*            |
| 1683 | Pol. I M: Naval Negotiations between Foreign Countries.  |
| 1723 | Pol. V: Political Relations of Danzig with Poland.   |
| 1744 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Austria with Germany.  |
| 1780 | Collection of Foreign Ministry Internal Circulars and Organizational Tables.                   |
| 1812 | German Embassy in Russia: Czechoslovakia.  |
| 1833 | Pol. IV: International Problems—Dardanelles Question.  |
| 1847 | Pol. IV: Hungary—Internal Politics; Political Relations with Germany; General Foreign Policy.* |
| 1872 | Pol. IV: International Problems: Western Pact, Five Power Conference (vols. 1 and 2).          |
| 1895 | Pol. IV: International Problems—The Little Entente.  |
| 1915 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Greece with Germany.   |
| 1921 | Pol. IV: Rumania—General Foreign Policy.   |
| 1923 | Pol. II: Netherlands—Heads of State and their Families.  |
| 1933 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Rumania with Germany.  |
| 1941 | Pol. IV: Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany.                                   |

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
1946	Pol. IV: Political Relations of Ethiopia with Italy.
1986	Pol. IV: Rumania—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
2019	Pol. IV: Austria—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
2067	Geheimakten: Naval Attaché, London.
2092	Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Russia.
2102	Pol. V: Poland—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties; Nationality Questions, Foreign Communities; Political Relations of Poland with the United States.*
2370	Pol. IV: Czechoslovakia—General Foreign Policy; Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany.*
2381	Pol. IV: Czechoslovakia—Racial Question, Nationalities Questions, Foreign Communities.
2422	Pol. IX: Political Relations of the United States with Germany.
2425	Cultural Policy Department (later Inland II geheim): Confidential Papers of Cultural Policy Division A, 1935–1937.
2431	Pol. IX: United States—General Foreign Policy.
2558	Supplementary to 408.
2871	Political Department: Treaties.
2882	Pol. II: Switzerland—National Socialism, Fascism and similar Movements.
2898	Pol. VIII: Political Relations of Japan with Germany.
3023	Supplementary to 2425.
3108	German Legation in Czechoslovakia: Secret Payments.
3175	German Embassy in Italy: Secret Papers, 1936.
3242	Reich Foreign Minister [I]: Mussolini-Laval Decisions at Rome; Article 16 of the League Covenant.*
3245	Office of the Adjutants of the Führer: Personalities—v. Ribbentrop.
3250	Pol. IV: International Problems—Rome Protocols, Danubian Region Question.
3254	Pol. IV: Austria—Former Ruling Families.
3317	Supplementary to 408.
3325	Pol. II: Belgium—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
3405	Pol. IV: International Problems—International Congresses.
3406	Supplementary to 621.
3408	Supplementary to 1847.
3409	Pol. IV: Rumania—Ministries.
3412	Supplementary to 1847.
3476	Supplementary to 3254.
3494	Pol. VII: Turkey—General Foreign Policy.
3564	Pol. IV: Yugoslavia—Political Tours of Foreign Statesmen and other prominent Personalities.
3598	Reich Chancellery [I]: Cabinet Protocols.
3610	Pol. IV: International Problems—Three Power Conference.
3612	Pol. V: Danzig—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties, vol. 2.
3618	Pol. IV: International Problems—Western Pact, Five Power Conference (vol. 3, also Supplementary to 1872).
3627	Pol. V: Danzig—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties, vol. 1.
3631	Pol. V: Political Relations of Danzig with Poland, vol. 3.
3653	Supplementary to 2381.
3673	Pol. IV: Czechoslovakia—Press Affairs.
3781	Supplementary to 2092.
3793	German Embassy in Italy: German-Italian Relations.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 3823 Supplementary to 2882.
- 3925 German Embassy in Poland: German-Polish Relations, General.
- 3944 German Legation in Belgium: Secret Files.
- 3987 Pol. I M: International Problems—Disarmament Conference.
- 4404 Department II Pol.: Spain—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 4602 State Secretary [I]: Memoranda on Visits of Diplomats.
- 4603 State Secretary [I]: Memoranda on Internal Directives, Views on Specific Questions, Notes etc.
- 4619 State Secretary [I]: Correspondence with and Memoranda by the Reich Minister.
- 4620 State Secretary [I]: Political Correspondence with Officials of the Foreign Service.
- 4939 German Legation in Austria: Secret Papers.
- 4941 German Legation in Denmark: League of Nations.
- 4943 German Legation in Denmark: Army and Navy.
- 5246 Reich Chancellery [II]: Poland; Portugal.\*
- 5482 Office of Minister President Göring: Reports on Foreign Countries.
- 5564 Geheimakten: War Material, Non-European Countries.
- 5574 Geheimakten: Secret Military Intelligence.
- 5576 Geheimakten: Military Attaché, London (also Brussels and The Hague).
- 5577 Supplementary to 2067.
- 5578 Geheimakten: Air Attaché, London.
- 5606 Geheimakten: Military Attaché, Paris.
- 5642 Ministerialdirektor Ritter: Italy.
- 5643 Ministerialdirektor Ritter: Poland.
- 5644 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Russia.
- 5649 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—United States of America, vols. 4–5, April 1934–May 1936.
- 5651 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—Argentina.
- 5667 Ministerialdirektor Ritter: Turkey.
- 5669 Department II Pol.: Political Relations of France with Germany.
- 5727 *Nachlässe*: Renthe-Fink Papers—Memorandum concerning the Rhineland.
- 5729 Department III Pol.: Great Britain—General Foreign Policy.
- 5731 Department III Pol.: Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany—Denunciation of Locarno.
- 5740 Department III Pol.: Political Relations of Great Britain with Germany.
- 5749 Economic Policy Division IXa: Mexico—Petroleum.
- 5753 Department II Pol.: Italian–Austrian–Hungarian Conversations in Rome in March 1934–1936.
- 5759 German Embassy in Great Britain: Germany—Army and Air Force.
- 5809 Supplementary to 1675 and 3627.
- 5846 Supplementary to 1376.
- 5849 Press Department: The Press in Great Britain (except London, Ireland and the Colonies); The London Press; Great Britain—General.\*
- 5888 Geheimakten: Military Attaché, Prague (also Belgrade and Bucharest).
- 5948 Supplementary to 1872.
- 5949 Supplementary to 1872.

*Film Serial  
Numbers**Title of File*

- 5950 Supplementary to 3618.
- 6001 Geheimakten: Political Relations of Italy with Germany.
- 6008 Supplementary to 2370 and 2381.\*
- 6022 Department IV Pol.: Political Relations of China with Germany.
- 6025 Department IV Pol.: Political Relations of Russia with Germany.
- 6044 Press Department: Measures to enhance German Prestige in Switzerland.
- 6081 Geheimakten: Austria—Reports by Minister von Papen to the Führer.
- 6098 Department II Pol.: Switzerland—Military Affairs.
- 6110 German Consulate General at Zurich: Commercial, Financial and Economic Questions (Secret).
- 6114 Geheimakten: Austria—National Socialism, Negotiations to achieve Unity.
- 6144 Geheimakten: Czechoslovakia—Nationality Question, Foreign Communities.
- 6180 Supplementary to 3325.
- 6333 Supplementary to 2431.
- 6336 Pol. IX: United States—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- 6403 German Embassy in France: German Guarantee Proposal, Locarno.
- 6409 Pol. I Vbd.: Criticism of the League of Nations and Proposals to reform the League of Nations.
- 6416 Economic Policy Department: Clodius Papers—United States of America, vol. 6, June 1936–December 1937.
- 6417 Economic Policy Division IXa: Trade Treaty Relations of the United States with Germany.
- 6420 Economic Policy Division IXa: Trade Relations of the United States with Germany—Imports, Exports and Transit Trade.
- 6432 Department II Pol.: League of Nations Section—91st (extraordinary) Session of the Council.
- 6466 Economic Policy Division IXb: Trade Treaty Relations of Brazil with Germany.
- 6467 Economic Policy Division IXb: Brazil—Deliveries.
- 6483 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—South America.
- 6492 Economic Policy Department: Treaties—Brazil.
- 6609 Geheimakten: Political Relations of Russia with Germany.
- 6646 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Rumania.
- 6659 Supplementary to 1159.
- 6680 Geheimakten: China—Barter Transactions and Economic Agreements, Klein's Projects.
- 6690 Geheimakten: Economic Negotiations between Germany and Russia.
- 6694 Geheimakten: East Asia—Former German Colonies.
- 6695 Geheimakten: Franco-Russian Proposals for an Eastern Pact.
- 6710 Department II F Abr.: Proclamation of German Sovereignty in the Rhineland Zone.
- 6719 Supplementary to 3610.
- 6782 Economic Policy Department: Secret Papers—Trade in War Material, Non-European Countries.
- 6789 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Four-year Plan, General.
- 6801 Office of the Adjutants of the Führer: Reich Leadership.
- 6976 Pol. I M: Armaments, Increase in Length of Service, Labour Front, Fortifications.



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Numbers**Title of File*

- 6982 Pol. I M: Armaments etc.—Attitude of Other Countries.
- 6986 Economic Policy: Division IXa: Commercial Relations between the United States of America and Germany.
- 6987 Referat Deutschland (later Inland II AB): Combating Bolshevism.
- 6988 Supplementary to 6420.
- 7023 *Nachlässe*: Renthe-Fink Papers—Memorandum by Trautmann of June 10, 1936.
- 7105 Economic Department: Coffee.
- 7197 Pol. I Vbd.: Relations between Abyssinia and Italy.
- 7198 Pol. I Vbd.: Italy.
- 7203 Pol. IV: Austria—Ministries.
- 7205 Department III Pol.: Ethiopia—Attitude of Italy towards Sanctions against Italy.
- 7208 German Embassy in Italy: Italy—General Foreign Policy.
- 7213 German Embassy in Italy: Ciano's Visit to Berlin, 1936.
- 7215 German Embassy in Italy: Abyssinia.
- 7218 German Embassy in Italy: German-Italian Trade Treaty (Special File).
- 7219 German Embassy in Italy: German-Italian Trade Treaty and further Economic Negotiations.
- 7237 Economic Policy Department: Treaties—Turkey.
- 7238 German Embassy in Italy: Turkey.
- 7245 Supplementary to 1627, 1638 and 1651.
- 7253 Economic Policy Division IVa: Economic Relations of Southern Europe with Germany.
- 7263 Supplementary to 392.
- 7268 Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Yugoslavia.
- 7273 Economic Policy Division IVa: Economic Relations of Yugoslavia with Germany.
- 7275 Economic Policy Department: Treaties—Yugoslavia, Supplementary Agreements.
- 7286 Supplementary to 5740.
- 7294 Office of the Adjutants of the Führer: von Ribbentrop.
- 7296 Pol. X: South Africa—General Foreign Policy.
- 7358 Sonderreferat S [Shipping]: New Arrangements concerning the Representation of the Reich on the International River Commissions.
- 7417 Economic Policy Division IVa: Hungary—Barter Transactions.
- 7418 Supplementary to 1986.
- 7420 Economic Policy Division IVb: Economic Relations of Rumania with Germany.
- 7434 Speer Files: Adolf Hitler's Memorandum on a Four Year Plan.
- 7435 Reich Foreign Minister [I]: Decree of the Führer to improve the Raw Materials and Foreign Exchange Situation.
- 7436 Supplementary to 1872 and 3618.
- 7440 German Embassy in Italy: Art and Science.
- 7441 Supplementary to 2588.
- 7443 Supplementary to 1872.
- 7456 Department II F Abr.: Naval Conference.
- 7506 Supplementary to 1833.
- 7518 Department III Pol.: Political Relations of Great Britain with Czechoslovakia.

<i>Film Serial Numbers</i>	<i>Title of File</i>
7529	Press Department: Measures to Influence the Press in the Netherlands.
7559	Supplementary to 2067.
7560	Supplementary to 1159.
7562	Reich Chancellery [I]: Security.
7575	Pol. I Vbd.: 96th Session of the Council; Relations of Germany with Poland.*
7576	Supplementary to 631.
7586	Supplementary to 1723.
7589	German Embassy in Poland: Minorities Declaration; Polish-French Relations; German-Polish Economic Treaty.*
7590	Pol. V: Danzig—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
7596	German Consulate General at Danzig: Treatment of Danzig Affairs in the League of Nations; Volkstag and Parties, High Commissioner; Miscellaneous Secret Papers.*
7609	Press Department: Great Britain—Press, Propaganda etc. (Secret).
7621	German Legation in Austria—Great Britain and Colonies.
7672	Supplementary to 1376 and 5846.
7680	German Embassy in Italy: Danubian States (Political); Italian-Hungarian Economic Relations; Italian-Japanese Relations.*
7681	German Legation in Budapest: German Foreign Policy.
7689	German Embassy in Italy: Italian-Czechoslovak Economic Relations.
7788	Naval Archives: Chef SK—Naval Conference, 1936; SK—Reports from German Missions and Attachés; Dardanelles; Montreux Agreement.*
7790	Naval Archives: SK 20—Anglo-German Naval Agreement; Naval Conference, 1935–1936; Preliminary Negotiations.*
7791	Naval Archives: SK 22—Negotiations on Increasing German U-boat tonnage and converting Cruisers K and L; SK 23—Naval Discussions: Northern States, Poland, Balkans; SK 24—Denunciation of Naval Agreement; SK 26—German-British and German-Italian Naval Negotiations in Berlin, 1938/39.*
7806	Geheimakten: Air Attaché, Paris.
7846	Department II F Abr.: Air-Locarno.
7849	Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Hungary; Rumania—Annual Reports.*
7856	Supplementary to 1650, 1941, 2370 and 2381.*
7864	German Legation in Hungary: German-Hungarian Relations; Hungary—Internal Political Situation; Hungarian Foreign Political Relations.*
7880	German Embassy in Italy (Secret): Memorandum concerning Denunciation of Locarno.
7896	Supplementary to 5574.
7961	Supplementary to 3610.
7962	Department II Pol.: League of Nations Section—Locarno Conference, 1936.
8010	<i>Handakten</i> : Papers of Interpreter Schmidt.
8015	Department III Pol.: Political Relations of Ethiopia with Italy.
8017	Department III Pol.: Ethiopian-Italian Conflict—Attitude of the British Empire towards Sanctions against Italy.
8019	Department III Pol.: Ethiopian-Italian Conflict—Attitude of France (Morocco, Tunis, Syria) towards Sanctions against Italy.

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| 8023 | Department III Pol.: Ethiopia—Pronouncements of the League of Nations.                                  |
| 8035 | Reich Chancellery [II]: Italy.  |
| 8062 | Pol. I Vbd.: Abyssinia.   |
| 8063 | Supplementary to 7198.  |
| 8214 | Department II Econ.: France—State Finance, General.   |
| 8229 | Supplementary to 6680.  |
| 8413 | Department II Pol.: Spain—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.                                    |
| 8451 | Economic Department: Foreign Exchange—Germany and Belgium.  |
| 8463 | Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Belgium with France.   |
| 8607 | Department II F Abr.: Disarmament Conference on Material—France.  |
| 8609 | Supplementary to 8015.  |
| 8641 | Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Austria with Czechoslovakia.                                 |
| 8656 | Department II Pol.: Austria—Former Ruling Families.   |
| 8678 | German Legation in Austria: German-Austrian Agreement of July 11, 1936.                                 |
| 8795 | Supplementary to 605.   |
| 8798 | Department III Pol.: Political Relations of South Africa with Germany—Pirow's Visit, 1933.              |
| 8803 | Press Department: Turkey—Press, Propaganda etc. (Secret).   |
| 8873 | Department IV Pol.: Japan—General Foreign Policy.   |
| 8887 | Department IV Pol.: Political Relations of Japan with Russia.   |
| 8911 | Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Czechoslovakia with Germany.                                 |
| 8917 | Supplementary to 1872.  |
| 8919 | Department IV Pol.: Negotiations on a German-Lithuanian Settlement.                                     |
| 8934 | Supplementary to 6710.  |
| 8969 | Geheimakten: Military Policy.   |
| 8983 | German Embassy in Italy: Austria, Political.  |
| 8988 | Economic Policy Department: Wiehl Papers—Italy.   |
| 9019 | Department IV Pol.: Political Relations of Lithuania with Poland.                                       |
| 9093 | German Embassy in Poland: Interessengemeinschaft Kattowitz.   |
| 9096 | Economic Policy Department: Treaties—Barter Transactions between Germany and Spain (Secret).            |
| 9127 | Cultural Policy Department: The German Community in Czechoslovakia.                                     |
| 9144 | Department II Pol.: Czechoslovakia—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.                           |
| 9164 | Pol. V: Danzig—National Socialism, Fascism and Similar Movements.                                       |
| 9172 | German Embassy in Poland: Railway Payments to Poland arising from Transit Traffic through the Corridor. |
| 9326 | Economic Policy Division IVa: Greece—Currency and Foreign Exchange.                                     |
| 9328 | Economic Policy Division IVa: Economic Relations of Greece with Germany.                                |
| 9360 | Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Yugoslavia with Czechoslovakia.                              |
| 9371 | Department II Pol.: Yugoslavia—General Foreign Policy.  |

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- 9414 Economic Policy Department (Secret): Trade in War Material—Balkan States.
- 9545 Supplementary to 2381.
- 9560 Supplementary to 1650.
- 9564 Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Hungary with Germany.
- 9566 Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Hungary with Great Britain.
- 9577 Department II Pol.: Hungary—Military Affairs.
- 9585 Geheimakten: Czechoslovakia—Procurement of Credits for the Promotion of the German Community.
- 9588 Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Rumania with Germany.
- 9590 Department II Pol.: Political Relations of Rumania with Great Britain; with Russia.\*
- 9592 Department II F Luft: Air Traffic—Czechoslovakia.
- 9596 Department II Pol.: German Diplomatic and Consular Representation in Rumania.
- 9608 Department II Pol.: Little Entente.
- 9631 Economic Policy Department: Treaties—German-French Agreement of July 28, 1934.
- 9660 Geheimakten: Agreement with Poland on the Renunciation of the Use of Force in the Settlement of Disputes.
- 9690 Pol. IV: German Diplomatic and Consular Representation in Czechoslovakia.
- 9728 Geheimakten: Aviation.
- 9804 Pol. MC: German-American Claims for Compensation—Sabotage Claims (Special Secret File).
- 9812 German Legation in Lithuania: German-Lithuanian Relations (also East Prussia).
- 9841 Department II, Treaties: German-Yugoslav Trade Treaty; German-Czechoslovak Trade Treaty; German-Hungarian Trade Treaty.\*
- 9944 Naval Archives: 1 SKL I, Op. 23—1: Period of Tension following Entry into Rhineland.
- K 177 Geheimakten: Poland-France—Political Relations.
- K 341 Supplementary to 9588.
- K 1914 Pol. MC: German-American Claims for Compensation—Sabotage Claims.
- K 1991 Department III Pol.: Great Britain—Ministries.
- K 2133 Sonderreferat S [Shipping]: River Navigation, General.
- K 2215 Referat Deutschland: Thälmann Case.
- L 806 Reich Chancellery [I]: Trade—Russia.
- L 987 Department V: Locarno—Permanent Arbitration Commissions.
- M 125 Supplementary to 6695.
- M 203 Department II Pol.: Luxemburg—General Foreign Policy.
- M 205 Department III Pol.: Great Britain—Internal Politics, Parliament and Parties.
- M 206 Department III Econ.: Ecuador—Barter Transactions and Economic Agreements.
- M 207 Supplementary to 769.
- M 208 Supplementary to 6403.
- M 278 Supplementary to 8015.
- M 279 Department II F Abr.: League of Nations Affairs.
- M 280 Department II, Treaties: Spain—Trade Agreements etc.



*Film Serial**Numbers**Title of File*

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| M 281 | German Embassy in Italy: Locarno Pact, Franco-Russian Pact, Western Pact etc. (vol. 1).               |
| M 284 | Supplementary to 5606.  |
| M 286 | German Embassy in Italy: Locarno Pact, Franco-Russian Pact, Western Pact etc. (vols. 2-4).            |
| M 287 | Supplementary to 6403.  |
| M 296 | Department II Pol.: Spain—Former Ruling Families.   |
| M 297 | Supplementary to 7213.  |
| M 298 | German Embassy in Italy: Danubian States, Political.  |
| M 300 | Supplementary to 9728.  |
| M 301 | Supplementary to 8214.  |
| M 319 | Supplementary to 7962.  |
| M 320 | Supplementary to 5731.  |
| M 321 | Supplementary to 7806.  |
| M 326 | Economic Policy Department: Treaties—Payments Agreement between Germany and Iran of October 30, 1935. |
| M 327 | Economic Department: Foreign Exchange—Germany and South Africa.                                       |
| M 328 | Department III, Treaties: German-Irish Trade Agreement of January 28, 1935.                           |
| M 330 | Department III Econ.: Ireland—Barter Transactions and Economic Agreements.                            |
| M 354 | Supplementary to 2067.  |

## Appendix III

### LIST OF PRINCIPAL PERSONS<sup>1</sup>

- ALFIERI, Dino, Under Secretary of State in the Italian Ministry for Press and Propaganda until June 1936, Minister for Press and Propaganda June 1936-1939.
- ALOISI, Pompeo Baron, *Chef de cabinet* of the Italian Foreign Ministry and Italian representative on the Council of the League of Nations until June 1936.
- ALTENBURG, Günther, Counsellor of Legation, an official of Department II and subsequently of Political Division IV in the German Foreign Ministry.
- ANTONESCU, Victor, Rumanian Minister of Finance 1935-August 1936; Foreign Minister in succession to Titulescu from August 1936.
- ARAS, Tewfik Rüstü, Turkish Foreign Minister.
- ARITA, Hachiro, Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs; previously Japanese Ambassador in China.
- ARONE, Pietro, Baron di Valentino, Italian Ambassador in the Soviet Union until October 1, 1936.
- ASCHMANN, Gottfried, Senior Counsellor, Head of the Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry.
- ATATÜRK, Mustafa Kemâl, President of the Turkish Republic.
- ATTOLICO, Bernardo, Italian Ambassador in the Soviet Union 1930-1935, Ambassador in Germany 1935-1940.
- AVENOL, Joseph A., Secretary General of the League of Nations.
- AZAÑA Y DÍAZ, Don Manuel, Spanish Minister President from February 19, 1936; elected President of the Spanish Republic on May 10, 1936.
- BALDWIN, Stanley, British Prime Minister.
- BARDOLFF, Karl Freiherr von, retired Austrian General, President of the German Club in Vienna.
- BASTIANINI, Giuseppe, Italian Ambassador in Poland 1932-1936; Under State Secretary in the Italian Foreign Ministry from June 9, 1936.
- BECK, Józef, Colonel, Polish Foreign Minister.
- BECK, Ludwig, Lieutenant General, Chief of the General Staff of the German Army, May 1935-1938.
- BENEŠ, Eduard, Czechoslovak Foreign Minister 1918-1935; President of the Republic in succession to Masaryk, December 18, 1935-October 5, 1938.
- BENZLER, Felix, Senior Counsellor, Deputy Director of the Economic, subsequently Economic Policy, Department in the German Foreign Ministry.
- BERGEN, Diego von, German Ambassador to the Holy See.
- BERGER-WALDENEGG, Egon Freiherr von, Austrian Foreign Minister 1934-May 13, 1936; Austrian Minister in Italy May 1936-1938.
- BISMARCK, Otto Prince von, Counsellor at the German Embassy in Great Britain until October 1936.

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<sup>1</sup> The biographical details given relate principally to the period and subjects covered by the documents in this volume.

- BLOMBERG, Werner von, Colonel General, Reichswehr Minister June 1932–May 1, 1935; Reich War Minister and Commander in Chief of the Wehrmacht May 1, 1935–February 4, 1938; promoted Field Marshal April 20, 1936.
- BLUM, Léon, French Deputy and Leader of the Socialist Party; Minister President June 4, 1936–1937.
- BODENSCHATZ, Karl Heinrich, Lieutenant Colonel, Adjutant to General Göring.
- BODENSTEIN, H. D. J., State Secretary of the South African Ministry of External Affairs.
- BOHLE, Ernst Wilhelm, Gauleiter and Head of the Auslandsorganisation of the NSDAP on the Staff of the Führer's Deputy.
- BONNET, Georges, French Radical Socialist Deputy; Minister of Commerce and Industry in the Laval Cabinet June 7, 1935–January 22, 1936, and in the Sarraut Cabinet January 24–June 6, 1936.
- BÖTTCHER, Viktor, Director of the Foreign Affairs Department of the Danzig Senate.
- BOVA SCOPPA, Renato, General Secretary of the Italian delegation to the League of Nations.
- BRATIANU, Gheorghe, Leader of the Rumanian Young Liberal Party.
- BRÄUER, Curt, Counsellor at the German Legation in Belgium.
- BRUCE, Stanley Melbourne, Australian High Commissioner in London, President of the Council of the League of Nations during its 91st session, 1936.
- BÜLOW, Bernhard Wilhelm von, State Secretary of the German Foreign Ministry, died in June 1936.
- BUTTI, Gino, Director General of the Department of European and Mediterranean Affairs in the Italian Foreign Ministry.
- CANARIS, Wilhelm, Admiral, Head of the Intelligence Department (*Abwehr*) of the Wehrmachtsamt in the Reich War Ministry.
- CAROL II, King of Rumania, renounced all his rights to the throne in favour of his son, Michael, who was proclaimed Heir Apparent in January 1926 and King on July 20, 1927, on the death of his grandfather, King Ferdinand I (of Hohenzollern); Carol returned to Rumania in 1930, the Acts excluding him from the throne were annulled and he ascended the throne on June 8, 1930; abdicated September 6, 1940.
- CERRUTI, Vittorio, Italian Ambassador in Germany 1932–1935; Ambassador in France 1935–1938.
- CHAMBERLAIN, Sir Austen, British Conservative M.P.; Foreign Secretary 1924–1929; First Lord of the Admiralty in the National Government, August–October 1931.
- CHAMBERLAIN, Neville, British Conservative M.P.; Chancellor of the Exchequer in the National Government November 5, 1931–June 6, 1935, and in the Baldwin Cabinet June 7, 1935–May 28, 1937.
- CHAMBRUN, Louis-Charles, Comte de, French Ambassador in Italy.
- CHAUTEPS, Camille, French Radical Socialist Senator; Minister of Public Works in the Sarraut Cabinet January 24–June 4, 1936; Minister of State in the Blum Cabinet, June 4, 1936–1937.
- CHIANG KAI-SHEK, Marshal, Commander in Chief of the Chinese Armed Forces, Member of the Council of State of the Chinese National Government.
- CHURCHILL, Winston Spencer, British Conservative M.P.; First Lord of the Admiralty 1911–1915; Secretary of State for War 1918–1921; Chancellor of the Exchequer 1925–1929.
- CIANO DI CORTELLAZZO, Galeazzo, Count, Italian Minister of Press and Propaganda until June 1936, thereafter Italian Foreign Minister.
- CILIAX, Otto, Captain (Navy), Head of the Fleet Department of the Naval Command Office in the High Command of the Navy.

- ČINCAR-MARKOVIĆ, Aleksander, Yugoslav Minister in Germany.
- CLODIUS, Carl, Senior Counsellor, an official of the Economic Department; from May, 1936, Head of Economic Policy Division III in the German Foreign Ministry.
- COLIJN, Hendrikus, Netherlands Minister President, Minister of Colonies and of Defence.
- COMNEN, see PETRESCU-COMNEN.
- CRAIGIE, Robert Leslie, Assistant Under Secretary of State and Head of the American Department in the British Foreign Office.
- CRANBORNE, Robert Cecil, Viscount, British Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
- CSÁKY, István, Count, *Chef de cabinet* to the Hungarian Foreign Minister, Kánya.
- DALADIER, Edouard, French Deputy and President of the Radical Socialist Party; Minister of War in the Blum Cabinet June 4, 1936–1937.
- DANCKWERTS, Victor, Captain R.N., of the Plans Division, British Naval Staff.
- DARÁNYI, Kálmán, Hungarian Minister of Agriculture; Minister President from October 12, 1936.
- DAVIGNON, Jacques Vicomte, Belgian Minister in Germany.
- DEGRELLE, Léon, Founder and Leader of the Belgian Rexist Party.
- DELBOS, Yvon, French Radical Socialist Deputy; Minister of Justice in the Sarraut Cabinet January 24–June 4, 1936; Foreign Minister in the Blum Cabinet June 4, 1936–1937.
- DEMERTZIS, Constantine, Greek Minister President and Foreign Minister until April 1936.
- DENSCH, Hermann, German Rear Admiral, Chief of Staff to the Commander in Chief of the Navy.
- DIECKHOFF, Hans Heinrich, Ministerialdirektor; Director of Department III in the German Foreign Ministry, also acting Director of Department II, December 20, 1935–May 14, 1936; Director of the Political Department from May 1936 and subsequently Acting State Secretary.
- DILL, John Creer, Major General, Director of Military Operations and Intelligence in the British War Office.
- DIRKSEN, Herbert von, German Ambassador in Japan.
- DODD, William Edward, United States Ambassador in Germany.
- DOLLFUSS, Engelbert, Austrian Federal Chancellor, Foreign Minister and Minister for Agriculture and Forestry May 1932–July 25, 1934, when he was assassinated; founded the Fatherland Front to embrace all Austrian political parties supporting his Government in 1933.
- DUFF COOPER, Alfred, British Conservative M.P.; Secretary of State for War.
- EDEN, Anthony, British Conservative M.P.; Lord Privy Seal January 1, 1934–June 6, 1935; Minister for League of Nations Affairs June 7, 1935–December 22, 1935; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs December 22, 1935–February 20, 1938.
- EDWARD VIII, King of Great Britain, Ireland and the British Dominions beyond the Seas, Emperor of India; created Prince of Wales June 23, 1910; ascended the throne on the death of his father, King George V, January 20, 1936; abdicated December 11, 1936.
- EDWARDS, Agustín, Chilean Ambassador in Great Britain; Chilean Representative on the Council of the League of Nations.
- EISENLOHR, Ernst, German Minister in Czechoslovakia.
- ERDMANNSDORFF, Otto von, a Deputy Director of Department III in the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently Head of the Extra-European Section of the Political Department.



EYRES-MONSELL, see MONSELL.

FABRICIUS, Wilhelm, Counsellor at the German Embassy in Turkey 1932-1936; Minister in Rumania April 1936-January 1941.

FALKENHAUSEN, Alexander von, German Lieutenant General (retired), military adviser to the Chinese Nationalist Government.

FEY, Emil, Major, Heimwehr Leader; Austrian Minister of the Interior July 30, 1934-October 17, 1935.

FLANDIN, Pierre-Etienne, Chairman of the Alliance démocratique in the French Chamber from 1936; Chairman of the Républicains de gauche; Minister President in the Government of National Union November 8, 1934-May 31, 1935; Minister without Portfolio in the Laval Cabinet June 7, 1935-January 22, 1936; Foreign Minister in the Sarraut Cabinet January 24-June 4, 1936.

FORSTER, Albert, Gauleiter of Danzig.

FORSTER, Dirk, Counsellor at the German Embassy in France.

FRANCO Y BAHAMONDE, Francisco, Spanish General; became Commander in Chief of the Nationalist Army and assumed the title of Chief of State, October 1, 1936.

FRANÇOIS-PONCET, André, French Ambassador in Germany.

FRANK, Hans, Reich Minister without Portfolio; Reich Commissioner for Justice; President of the Academy of German Law.

FRANK, Karl Hermann, Member of the Sudeten German Party; became one of its Deputies in the Czechoslovak Parliament in 1935.

FRICK, Wilhelm, Reich and Prussian Minister of the Interior.

FRITSCH, Werner Freiherr von, General, Chief of the German Army Command February 1934-May 1, 1935; Commander in Chief of the Army May 1, 1935-February 4, 1938; promoted Colonel General April 20, 1936.

FUNK, Walther, Press Chief of the Reich Government and State Secretary in the Reich Ministry for Propaganda.

GAMELIN, Maurice Gustave, General, Chief of the French Army General Staff.

GAUS, Friedrich, Ministerialdirektor, Director of the Legal Department in the German Foreign Ministry.

GEORGE II, King of the Hellenes; returned to the throne of Greece in November 1935, after a plebiscite in his favour.

GEYR VON SCHWEPPENBURG, Leo Freiherr, Major General, German Military Attaché in Great Britain, Belgium and the Netherlands.

GIE, S. F. N., South African Minister in Germany.

GLAISE-HORSTENAU, Edmund von, Director of the Austrian War Archives; Member of the Austrian Council of State; appointed Minister without portfolio July 11, 1936.

GOEBBELS, Joseph, Reich Minister for Popular Enlightenment and Propaganda.

GÖMBÖS, Gyula de, General, Hungarian Minister President and Minister of National Defence; died October 6, 1936.

GÖRING, Herbert L. W., an official of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics.

GÖRING, Hermann Wilhelm, General (Colonel General April 20, 1936); President of the German Reichstag; Minister President of Prussia, Reich Air Minister and Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe; appointed Commissioner for the Four Year Plan in October 1936.

GRAEFF, Jonkheer A. C. D. de, Netherlands Foreign Minister.

GRANDI, Dino, Italian Ambassador in Great Britain.

GREISER, Artur, President of the Danzig Senate.

GUSE, Günther, Rear-Admiral, Head of the Naval Command Office in the High Command of the German Navy.

- HAILE SELASSIE I** (the NEGUS), Emperor of Abyssinia, succeeded to the throne April 2, 1930; left Abyssinia May 1936.
- HALIFAX**, Edward Wood, 3rd Viscount, British Lord Privy Seal.
- HASSELL**, Ulrich von, German Ambassador in Italy.
- HEEREN**, Viktor von, German Minister in Yugoslavia.
- HEINBURG**, Curt, Senior Counsellor, an official of Department II of the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently Head of Political Division IV.
- HEMMEN**, Hans Richard, Counsellor of Embassy, Leader of delegations for the negotiation of commercial treaties in the Economic Department of the German Foreign Ministry.
- HENCKE**, Andor, Consul, an Official of Department II and subsequently of Political Division V in the German Foreign Ministry; Counsellor of the German Legation in Czechoslovakia from September 1936.
- HENLEIN**, Konrad, Chairman of the Sudeten German Party which was founded on September 30, 1933, as the Sudeten German Homeland Front (Sudeten-deutsche Heimatfront) and renamed prior to the Czechoslovak elections of May 1935.
- HERRIOT**, Edouard, French Radical Socialist Deputy; Minister of State without Portfolio in the Doumergue and Flandin Cabinets of National Union February 1934–May 1935; Minister without Portfolio in the Bouisson and Laval Cabinets June 1935–January 1936; President of the Chamber of Deputies from June 1936.
- HERTZOG**, Jan, General; South African Prime Minister and Foreign Minister.
- HESS**, Rudolf, Reich Minister and the Führer's Deputy.
- HIMMLER**, Heinrich, Reichsführer SS and Head of the German Police.
- HIROTA**, Koki, Japanese Prime Minister.
- HITLER**, Adolf, Führer and Chancellor of the Reich and Supreme Commander of the Wehrmacht.
- HOARE**, Sir Samuel, British Conservative M.P.; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs June 7–December 18, 1935; First Lord of the Admiralty June 4, 1936–May 28, 1937.
- HODŽA**, Milan, Czechoslovak Minister President.
- HOESCH**, Leopold von, German Ambassador in Great Britain, died April 10, 1936.
- HORTHY DE NAGYBANYA**, Miklós, Admiral, Regent of Hungary.
- HOTBLACK**, Frederick Elliott, Colonel, British Military Attaché in Germany.
- HULL**, Cordell, United States Secretary of State.
- HURGRONJE**, Jonkheer A. M. Snouck, Secretary General of the Netherlands Foreign Ministry.
- İNÖNÜ**, İsmet, General, Turkish Minister President.
- KAMPHOEVENER**, Kurt von, Senior Counsellor, an official of Department II of the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently Head of Political Division I.
- KANDELAKI**, David, Leader of the Soviet Trade Delegation in Germany.
- KÁNYA**, Kalmán de, Hungarian Foreign Minister.
- KASPER**, Rudolf, a member of the Sudeten German Party Executive and Head of the Sudeten German Party Central Office for workers' and employees' affairs.
- KEITEL**, Wilhelm, Major General, Chief of the Wehrmachtsamt in the Reich War Ministry, October 1935–February 1938.
- KELLER**, August Friedrich Wilhelm von, German Ambassador in Turkey.
- KEPPLER**, Wilhelm, the Führer's Commissioner for Economic Affairs in the Reich Chancellery.
- KERRL**, Hanns, Reich and Prussian Minister for Church Affairs since 1935.
- KIEP**, Otto, Minister, Leader of the German Economic Study Mission to Far Eastern countries 1935–1936.

- KLEIN, Hans, German business man with trading interests in the Far East.
- KORDT, Erich, Secretary of Legation, official of the German Foreign Ministry attached to the staff of Ambassador Ribbentrop.
- KORDT, Theo., Counsellor of the German Embassy in Greece.
- KOTZE, Hans Ulrich, Senior Counsellor, official of the Reich Foreign Minister's Secretariat.
- KRAHMER-MÖLLENBERG, Dr., Regierungsrat, Head of the Deutsche Stiftung.
- KRAUEL, Wolfgang, German Consul at Geneva.
- KRIEBEL, Hermann, Lt. Colonel (retired), German Consul General at Shanghai.
- KROFTA, Kamil, Director General of the Czechoslovak Foreign Ministry and Deputy Foreign Minister 1927–February 29, 1936; Foreign Minister February 29, 1936–October 4, 1938.
- KURSELL, Professor Otto von, Ministerialrat in the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Education; dealt with and coordinated certain Volksdeutsch matters through his office, the Bureau von Kursell.
- LAIGLESIA, Eduardo de, a representative of the Spanish C.E.D.A. Party and employed as an intermediary in armaments transactions between German firms and the Spanish Government.
- LAMMERS, Hans Heinrich, State Secretary and Head of the Reich Chancellery.
- LANGENHOVE, F. van, see under van Langenhove.
- LAVAL, Pierre, French Independent Senator, Foreign Minister in the Doumergue, Flandin and Bouisson Cabinets October 13, 1934–June 4, 1935; Minister President and Foreign Minister June 7, 1935–January 22, 1936.
- LÉGER, Alexis, Secretary General of the French Foreign Ministry.
- LEITH-ROSS, Sir Frederick, Chief Economic Adviser to the British Government.
- LEOPOLD III, King of the Belgians.
- LESTER, Séan, League of Nations High Commissioner in the Free City of Danzig.
- LIPSKI, Józef, Polish Ambassador in Germany.
- LITVINOV, Maxim Maximovich, People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs of the Soviet Union.
- LLOYD GEORGE, David, British Independent Liberal M.P.; Prime Minister 1916–1922.
- LONDONDERRY, Charles, 7th Marquess of, British Conservative politician, Secretary of State for Air 1931–1935; Lord Privy Seal June–November 1935.
- LORENZ, Max, Counsellor, an official of Department II of the German Foreign Ministry and subsequently of Political Division IV.
- LOTHIAN, Philip Henry Kerr, 11th Marquess of, British politician, Secretary to the Rhodes Trust, formerly secretary to Lloyd George during the latter's tenure of office as Prime Minister 1916–1922.
- LUBOMIRSKI, Prince Stefan, Counsellor at the Polish Embassy in Germany.
- LUPIN, Freiherr von, Secretary General of the Export Consortium for War Material (AGK) of the Reich Federation of Industry.
- LUTHER, Hans, German Ambassador in the United States.
- MACDONALD, James Ramsay, British National Labour M.P., Prime Minister in the National Government August 25, 1931–June 6, 1935; Lord President of the Council in the Baldwin Cabinet June 7, 1935–May 28, 1937.
- MACKENSEN, Hans Georg von, son of Field Marshal von Mackensen; German Minister in Hungary.
- MADARIAGA, Salvador de, Spanish writer and diplomatist; Spanish representative at the League of Nations.
- MAGISTRATI, Massimo, Count, Counsellor at the Italian Embassy in Germany.
- MAISKY, Ivan, Soviet Ambassador in Great Britain.



- MANDEL, Georges, French Independent Deputy; Minister of Posts and Telegraphs in the Buisson, Laval and Sarraut Cabinets, June 1, 1935–June 4, 1936.
- MASARYK, Thomas Garrigue; elected first President of the Czechoslovak Republic November 14, 1918, re-elected 1920, 1928 and 1934, resigned December 14, 1935.
- MASSIGLI, René, an Assistant Director of the Political and Commercial Department and Head of the League of Nations Division of the French Foreign Ministry.
- MASTNÝ, Vojtech, Czechoslovak Minister in Germany.
- MEISSNER, Otto, State Secretary and Head of the Presidential Chancellery of the Reich.
- MENEMENCIOĞLU, Numan Rifaat, Secretary General of the Turkish Foreign Ministry.
- METAXAS, Ioannis, General, Greek Minister President, Foreign Minister and Minister of War April 13, 1936–January 29, 1941.
- MIKLAS, Wilhelm, President of the Federal Republic of Austria.
- MILCH, Erhard, General, State Secretary of the Reich Air Ministry.
- MOLTKE, Hans-Adolf von, German Ambassador in Poland.
- MONSELL, 1st Viscount, Sir Bolton Eyres-Monsell, British First Lord of the Admiralty November 5, 1931–June 4, 1936.
- MOSSDORF, Ministerialrat, an official of the Reich Ministry of Economics.
- MÖSSEL, Wilhelm, German Commander (Navy); an official of the Fleet Department of the Naval Command Office and of the Group for Naval Conferences.
- MOTTA, Giuseppe, Swiss Federal Councillor, Head of the Political Department (Foreign Ministry) of the Federal Council.
- MUFF, Wolfgang, General, German Military Attaché in Austria, Bulgaria and Switzerland.
- MUNCH, Peter, Danish Foreign Minister.
- MUSHAKOJI, Kintomo, Viscount, Japanese Ambassador in Germany.
- MUSSOLINI, Benito, Founder and Leader of the Italian Fascist Party; Head of the Government, Foreign Minister and Minister of the Interior, Colonies, War, Marine and Air; relinquished portfolios of Foreign Affairs and Colonies June 9, 1936.
- NEUHAUSEN, Franz, Special Representative of Reich Minister Göring in South-East Europe.
- NEURATH, Constantin Freiherr von, Reich Foreign Minister; was Ambassador in Great Britain 1930–1932.
- NEWTON, Basil, Minister at the British Embassy in Germany.
- NUMAN, see MENEMENCIOĞLU.
- OSHIMA, Hiroshi, General, Japanese Military Attaché in Germany.
- OTT, Eugen, Colonel, German Military Attaché in Japan.
- OTTO, Archduke, Prince of Habsburg, Pretender to the Austrian throne.
- PAPÉE, Kasimierz, Polish Diplomatic Representative in Danzig.
- PAPEN, Franz von, German Minister in Austria on Special Mission directly responsible to Hitler with the personal rank of Envoy Extraordinary (Ambassador Extraordinary from July 1936).
- PAUL, Prince Regent of Yugoslavia during the minority of King Peter II.
- PAUL-BONCOUR, Joseph, French Independent Senator; Minister of State for League of Nations Affairs in the Sarraut Cabinet January 24–June 4, 1936.
- PÉTAÏN, Philippe, Marshal, member of the French Conseil supérieur de la Guerre and of the Conseil supérieur de la Défense Nationale.
- PETRESCU-COMNEN, Nicolae, Rumanian Minister in Germany.
- PHILLIPS, Thomas S. V., Captain R.N., Director of Plans, British Admiralty.



PHIPPS, Sir Eric, British Ambassador in Germany.

PILSUDSKI, Józef, Marshal of Poland; Inspector General of the Army; died May 12, 1935.

PIROW, Oswald, South African Minister of Defence and of Railways and Ports.

PLESSEN, Johann Baron von, Counsellor at the German Embassy in Italy.

POCHHAMMER, Wilhelm von, Counsellor at the German Legation in Rumania.

POSSE, Hans Ernst, State Secretary of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics.

PRÜFER, Curt, a Deputy Director of Department III in the German Foreign Ministry; in charge of Departments II and III during Dieckhoff's absence in London March–April 1936; Director of the Personnel Department from May 1936.

RADEK, Karl Bernhardovich, leading Soviet journalist and member of the editorial committee of *Izvestia* until the summer of 1936; generally regarded as the journalistic spokesman of the Soviet Government on foreign affairs.

RADOWITZ, Otto von, German Consul General in Danzig.

RAEDER, Erich, Admiral, Chief of the German Naval Command October 1, 1928–May 1, 1935; Commander in Chief of the Navy May 1, 1935–January 1943.

REICHENAU, Walter von, German General; Commander in Chief of Wehrkreis VII (Munich); on mission to China during 1936.

RENTHE-FINK, Cecil von, a Deputy Director of Department II of the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently Head of the European Section of the Political Department; German Minister in Denmark from July 1936.

RIBBENTROP, Joachim von, member of the NSDAP; appointed to be the Reich Chancellor's Commissioner for Disarmament Questions April 24, 1934, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary on Special Mission June 1, 1935; Leader of the German Delegation to the London Meeting of the Council of the League of Nations March 1936; appointed Ambassador in Great Britain August 1936 and took up duties in October.

RICHTHOFEN, Herbert, Freiherr von, German Minister in Denmark 1930–April 1936; Minister in Belgium May 1936–July 1938.

RINTELEN, Emil von, Counsellor, an official of Department II in the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently Head of Political Division II.

RITTER, Karl, Ministerialdirektor, Director of the Economic, subsequently Economic Policy, Department in the German Foreign Ministry.

ROATTA, Mario, General, Head of the Foreign Armies Department in the Italian War Ministry.

ROEDIGER, Conrad, Senior Counsellor, a Deputy Director of Department II in the German Foreign Ministry until May 1936.

ROMAN, Antoni, Polish Minister in Sweden 1935–1936, Minister of Industry and Commerce from May 15, 1936.

ROOSEVELT, Franklin Delano, President of the United States March 4, 1933, re-elected November 1936, November 1940 and November 1944; died April 12, 1945.

ROSENBERG, Alfred, Reichsleiter, Head of the Aussenpolitisches Amt of the NSDAP from 1933; editor of the NSDAP organ, *Völkischer Beobachter*, from 1921; a leading exponent of plans for German expansion into the Soviet Union and author of *Der Mythos des 20. Jahrhunderts*, an exposition of National Socialist ideology; the Führer's Commissioner for Supervising the Ideological Education of the National Socialist Movement from January 1934.

ROSSO, Augusto, Italian Ambassador in the Soviet Union from October 1936.

RYDZ-SMIGLY, Edward, General; Inspector-General of the Polish Army.

- SARNOW, Otto, Ministerialdirektor, Director of Department II in the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics.
- SARRAUT, Albert, French Senator, Minister President January 24–June 4, 1936.
- SCHACHT, Hjalmar, President of the Reichsbank and acting Reich and Prussian Minister of Economics.
- SCHMIDT, Guido, *vice-directeur de Cabinet* to President Miklas; Austrian State Secretary for Foreign Affairs from July 1936.
- SCHMIDT, Paul Otto, Counsellor, interpreter in the Personnel Department in the German Foreign Ministry; acted as personal interpreter to Hitler and official interpreter to the Foreign Minister at many conferences and discussions.
- SCHMIDT-KRUTINA, Dr. H., Secretary of Legation in the German Embassy in Italy.
- SCHMIEDEN, Werner von, Counsellor, an official of Department II in the German Foreign Ministry, subsequently an official of Political Division I.
- SCHNURRE, Karl, First Secretary at the German Legation in Hungary, subsequently Head of Economic Policy Division IV.
- SCHULENBURG, Friedrich Werner Count von der, German Ambassador in the Soviet Union.
- SCHUSCHNIGG, Kurt von, Austrian Federal Chancellor and Minister of National Defence, also Foreign Minister from May 14, 1936.
- SCHWERIN VON KROSIGK, Lutz Count, Reich Minister of Finance.
- SEECKT, Hans von, Colonel General, Head of the German Military Mission in China; he had been Chief of the German Army Command 1920–1926.
- SEYSS-INQUART, Dr. Artur, lawyer by profession; closely associated with the Austrian National Socialist Party from 1931 onwards.
- SIMON, Sir John, British Liberal-National M.P.; Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the National Government November 5, 1931–June 6, 1935; Secretary of State for Home Affairs June 7, 1935–May 28, 1937.
- SMUTS, Jan, General; South African Minister of Justice.
- SNOUCK, see HURGRONJE.
- SOKOLOWSKI, Mieczyslaw, Director of the Department of Commerce in the Polish Ministry of Industry and Commerce.
- SPAACK, Paul Henri, Belgian Socialist Deputy; Minister of Transport and Posts, March 1935–June 1936; Foreign Minister from June 1936.
- SPEER, Albert, German architect, member of the NSDAP, made responsible for the designs and decorations for large Party rallies and demonstrations; 1937 made Inspector-General for the rebuilding of Berlin; 1942 became Reich Minister for Armament and War Production, Head of the Organisation Todt, Plenipotentiary General for Armaments in the Office of the Four Year Plan, Chairman of the Armaments Council.
- STALIN, Josef Vissarionovich, General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union.
- STARHEMBERG, Ernst Rüdiger Prince, Austrian Heimwehr Leader; Austrian Vice-Chancellor and Minister of Security and Leader of the Fatherland Front until May 13, 1936.
- STEIN, Boris, Russian Ambassador in Italy.
- STEINACHER, Hans, Head of the Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland (VDA).
- STIEVE, Friedrich, Senior Counsellor, Director of the Cultural Policy Department in the German Foreign Ministry.
- STOJADINOWIĆ, Milan, Yugoslav Minister President and Foreign Minister.
- SURITZ, Jakob, Soviet Ambassador in Germany.

- SUVICH, Fulvio, Under Secretary of State in the Italian Foreign Ministry until June 1936; Italian Ambassador in the United States from October 1936.
- SZEMBEK, Count Jan, Under Secretary of State in the Polish Foreign Ministry.
- SZTOJAY, Döme, Major General, Hungarian Minister in Germany December 19, 1935–March 1944; as Major General STOJAKOVICS he had been Military Attaché in Germany 1926–1933, and he Magyarized his name to SZTOJAY on being appointed Minister there.
- TATARESCU, Gheorghe, Rumanian Minister President.
- THOMAS, Colonel, Chief of the Economic Defence Staff in the Reich War Ministry.
- TIPPELSKIRCH, Werner von, Counsellor at the German Embassy in the Soviet Union.
- TITULESCU, Nicolae, Rumanian Foreign Minister until August 1936.
- TRAUTMANN, Oskar P., German Ambassador in China.
- TRENDELENBURG, Dr. Ernst P. A., State Secretary (retired) of the Reich and Prussian Ministry of Economics; Deputy Director of the Reich Chamber of Economics; Director of the Export Consortium for War Material (A.G.K.) of the Reich Federation of Industry.
- TSCHUNKE, E., Colonel, German Military Attaché in Czechoslovakia and Rumania.
- TUKHACHEVSKY, Mikhail Nikolaevich, Marshal of the Soviet Union, Second Vice Commissar for Defence; Member of the Central Executive Committee of the Soviet Union.
- TWARDOWSKI, Fritz von, Senior Counsellor, Deputy Director of the Cultural Policy Department in the German Foreign Ministry.
- VAN LANGENHOVE, F., Secretary General of the Belgian Foreign Ministry.
- VANSITTART, Sir Robert, British Permanent Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.
- VAN ZEELAND, Paul, Belgian Minister President.
- VÖLKERS, Hans Hermann, Counsellor at the German Embassy in Spain 1933–1936, and Chargé d’Affaires April–November 1936.
- WALTERS, Francis Paul, Under Secretary General and Director of the Political Section of the League of Nations.
- WARD PRICE, Frank, European Correspondent of the *London Daily Mail*.
- WASSNER, Erwin, Captain, German Naval Attaché in Great Britain.
- WEIZSÄCKER, Ernst Freiherr von, German Minister in Switzerland 1933–1937; Acting Director of the Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry August 1936–March 1937.
- WELCZEK, Johannes Count von, German Ambassador in Spain 1926–1936; Ambassador in France April 1936–1939.
- WIEHL, Emil, German Minister in South Africa.
- WIGRAM, Ralph, Head of Central Department in the British Foreign Office.
- WOERMANN, Ernst, Senior Counsellor, an official of the Legal Department of the German Foreign Ministry; Head of the European Section of the Political Department June–September 1936; appointed Counsellor of the German Embassy in Great Britain October 1936.
- WOHLTHAT, Helmuth, Ministerialdirektor in the Reich Office for Foreign Exchange Control.
- WOLFF, Otto, German coal and steel magnate; founder of the firm of Otto Wolff.
- ZECH-BURKERSRODA, Julius Count von, German Minister in the Netherlands.
- ZYNDRAM-KOSCIAŁKOWSKI, Marjan, Polish Minister President, October 1935–May 1936; thereafter Minister of Labour and Social Welfare.



## Appendix IV

### GLOSSARY OF GERMAN TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

- A, Marinekommandoamt**, Naval Command Office in the High Command of the Navy
- A I, Flottenabteilung**, Fleet Department of the Naval Command Office in the High Command of the Navy
- A III, Abteilung Marinenachrichtendienst**, Naval Intelligence Department of the Naval Command Office in the High Command of the Navy
- AA, Auswärtiges Amt**, the Reich Foreign Ministry
- Abwehr**, Intelligence Department of the *Wehrmachtsamt* (*q.v.*)
- a.D., ausser Dienst**, retired
- A.G., Aktiengesellschaft**, joint-stock company
- AGK, Ausführungsgemeinschaft für Kriegsggerät**, Export Consortium for War Material
- Ang., Angabe**, a designation given where action of more than one sort is to be taken on a paper, the relevant instructions being usually split up as Ang. I, II etc.; this follows the file number
- Anschluss**, union, unification; used especially in connexion with a union between Germany and Austria
- APA, Aussenpolitisches Amt**, the Foreign Affairs Office of the NSDAP of which Alfred Rosenberg was the Head
- Assessor**, candidate for the *höherer Dienst* (*q.v.*) who, having passed the General State Examination (*grosse Staatsprüfung*), is serving for a probationary period of not less than two years in an administrative department prior to permanent appointment
- Assistent**, grade in the *mittlerer Dienst* (*q.v.*)
- Att. Gr., Attaché Gruppe**, lit. "Attaché Group", the section of *O.Qu.* (*q.v.*) II or III through which correspondence with the German Military Attachés was channelled
- Auslandsorganisation (AO)**, lit. "Foreign Organization", the National Socialist organization dealing with German nationals living abroad. It was set up in May 1933 as the Foreign Department (*Auslandsabteilung*) of the NSDAP with Gauleiter Bohle as its Head, placed under the Führer's Deputy in October 1933 and renamed in February 1934. It constituted a separate Gau of the NSDAP
- Bezirksleiter**, district leader
- Brigadeführer, SA and SS** rank approximately equivalent to Major General
- Chefssache**, lit. "matter for Chiefs", a security classification used in conjunction with *g.Kdos.* (*q.v.*) to restrict distribution of documents to heads of sections of a High Command and to Divisional Commanders
- D.A.Z., Deutsche Allgemeine Zeitung**, a Berlin newspaper
- DDPK, Deutsche diplomatisch-politische Korrespondenz**, "German diplomatic-political Correspondence", a semi-official publication issued in Berlin
- Deutsche Stiftung**, an organization for providing funds to *Volksdeutsch* (*q.v.*) communities
- Dienststelle Ribbentrop**, Office of Ribbentrop in his capacity of foreign affairs adviser to Hitler
- Dipl. Ing., Diplom-Ingenieur**, certified engineer
- DNB, Deutsches Nachrichtenbüro**, the German news agency formed in



December 1933 by the amalgamation of three formerly independent news agencies

**e.o., ex officio**, where this precedes the file number it indicates a draft for which there are no preceding papers; see also **zu**

**Frhr., Freiherr**, hereditary title of nobility, approximately equivalent to baron

**Gau** (pl. **Gaue**), the largest territorial unit of the NSDAP; see also **Hoheits-träger**

**Gauleiter**, lit. "Gau Leader", rank in the NSDAP; see under **Hoheits-träger**

**Gauleitung** (pl. **Gauleitungen**), the headquarters of the NSDAP in a **Gau**

**geh., geheim**, secret

**Geheimakten**, secret files

**Geheimrat**, lit. "Privy Councillor", an obsolete honorary title

**gehobener Dienst**, the "Upper Service" in the German Civil Service which comes between the **mittlerer Dienst** (*q.v.*) and the **höherer Dienst** (*q.v.*). It contains the following four grades: (1) Inspektor, e.g. Technischer Inspektor, Bibliotheksinspektor, Regierungsinspektor, Verwaltungsinspektor, Konsultatssekretär (AA); (2) Oberinspektor e.g., Regierungsoberinspektor, Verwaltungsoberinspektor, Regierungsoberrevisor, Konsultatssekretär I Kl. (AA); (3) Amtmann, e.g., Regierungsamtman, Verwaltungsamtman, Kanzler (AA), Ministerialkanzleivorsteher; (4) Amtsrat (Hofrat until 1918)

**Generalreferent**, senior official in certain Ministries, see also **Referent**

**Gesamtorganisation der Wirtschaft**, the National Socialist Organization of Industry and Trade, whereby German business was divided into branches (**Reichsgruppen**) each under its own "leader"

**Gestapo, Geheime Staatspolizei**, German secret state police

**g.K., g.Kdos., geheime Kommando-sache**, indicates a security classification of Top Secret Military

**G.m.b.H., Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung**, limited company

**Gruppenführer**, SA and SS rank approximately equivalent to Lieutenant General

**Handakten**, file maintained by an individual official

**h.c., honoris causa**, honorary

**Heimatschutz, Heimwehr, Heimwehren**, lit. "Home Defence" or "Home Guard", Austrian right-wing political and para-military organizations. They were included in the Fatherland Front (*Vaterländische Front*) founded by Dollfuss in 1933

**Hofrat**, lit. "Royal Counsellor", an obsolete civil service rank; see under **gehobener Dienst**

**Hoheitssträger**, the highest ranking regional representative of the NSDAP, the most important of which, according to rank and province (**Hoheitsgebiet**) were:

Führer—Reich

Gauleiter—Gau

Kreisleiter—Kreis

Ortsgruppenleiter—Ortsgruppe

**höherer Dienst**, the "Higher Service" in the German Civil Service which corresponds to the Administrative Class in the British Civil Service, though the functions of certain lower grades may be more executive than administrative. It contains the following six grades: (1) Regierungsrat, Bibliothekar (Librarian), Gesandtschaftsrat (Counsellor of Legation) (AA), Legationsrat (Counsellor) (AA), Vizekonsul (Vice Consul) (AA); (2) Oberregierungsrat, Oberregierungsrat als Ministerialbürodirektor, Gesandtschaftsrat I Kl. (AA), Konsul I Kl. (AA), Legationsrat I Kl. (AA); (3) Ministerialrat, Botschaftsrat (Counsellor of Embassy) (AA), Generalkonsul (Consul General) (AA), Gesandter (Minister), Vortragender Legationsrat (Senior Counsellor) (AA); (4) Ministerialdirigent, Generalkonsul I Kl. (AA), Gesandter I Kl. (AA); (5) Ministerialdirektor, Gesandter I Kl. as Head of a Mission (AA); (6) Staatssekretär (State Sec-

- retary), Botschafter (Ambassador) (AA)
- HPA, Handelspolitischer Ausschuss** [beim Auswärtigen Amt], Commercial Policy Committee [at the Foreign Ministry], a standing committee, set up in 1926, consisting of representatives of the Foreign Ministry, the Reich Finance Ministry, the Reich Ministry of Economics and the Reich Ministry of Food and Agriculture. Its duties were to prepare and coordinate commercial treaty negotiations. From time to time other Ministries were invited to be represented on it
- I.G., Interessengemeinschaft**, a pool or trust in industry
- Kampfring**, lit. "band of fighters", an association formed in 1933 of Austrian National Socialists living in Germany
- Kanzler**, grade in the **gehobener Dienst** (*q.v.*); archivist, head of the chancery in a diplomatic Mission abroad
- Kommerzienrat**, Commercial Councilor, title conferred on industrialists, financiers and businessmen until 1919
- Kreis**, an administrative unit in local government; also a territorial unit of the NSDAP—see under **Hoheits-träger**
- Kreisleitung**, the headquarters of the NSDAP in a **Kreis**
- Kriminalkommissar**, officer in the Criminal Police
- Kriminalrat**, rank in the Criminal Police
- Kult., Kulturpolitische Abteilung**, Cultural Policy Department of the German Foreign Ministry after May 1936
- Land** (pl. **Länder**), lit. "country", usually denotes one of the Federal States of the Reich or of Austria
- Landesgruppe**, NSDAP organization in a country outside the Reich
- Landesführer**, provincial leader of the Austrian National Socialist Party
- Landeshauptmann** (pl. **Landeshauptleute**), the President of the State Government in one of the Federal States (*Bundesländer*) of Austria, also entrusted with the indirect Federal administration
- Landesinspekteur**, lit. "State Inspector", title bestowed by Hitler on the chief leader of the Austrian National Socialist Party (Theo. Habicht)
- Landesleitung**, directorate of the NSDAP in a foreign state; **Landes-leiter**, head of the **Landesleitung**
- Landesleitung Österreich**, directorate of the Austrian National Socialist Party, staff of the **Landesinspekteur** (*q.v.*); its headquarters were moved to Munich in June 1933
- Landgericht, Land** (*q.v.*) or State Court of Law; **Landgerichtsdirektor**, the President of such a court
- Landtag**, the representative assembly of the autonomous territory of Memel
- Luftwaffe**, German Air Force
- M**, indicates that a document has emanated from the staff of the C. in C., Navy
- M I**, indicates that a document has emanated from the senior officer on the staff of the C. in C., Navy
- M IV**, indicates that a document has emanated from the **Referent** (*q.v.*) on the staff of the C. in C., Navy
- M.D., Min. Dir., Ministerialdirektor**, grade in the **höherer Dienst** (*q.v.*) usually the director of a department in a Ministry
- Ministerialassessor**, see **Assessor**
- Ministerialdirigent** (**Dg.**), grade in the **höherer Dienst** (*q.v.*), usually the deputy director of a department in a Ministry
- Ministerialrat**, grade in the **höherer Dienst** (*q.v.*)
- mittlerer Dienst**, the "Intermediate Service" in the German Civil Service, which corresponds to the Clerical Class in the British Civil Service. It contains the following three grades: (1) Assistent, e.g., **Regierungsassistent**, **Verwaltungsassistent**; (2) Sekretär, e.g., **Regierungssekretär**, **Verwaltungssekretär**, **Kanzleivorstehender**, **Ministerialkanzleisekretär**; (3) Obersekretär, e.g., **Regierungsobersekretär**, **Verwaltungsobersekretär**, **Ministerialkanzleiobersekretär**

**M.J.A., M. im Auftrag**, by order of the C. in C., Navy

**NSDAP, Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei**, National Socialist German Workers' Party, the full title of the National Socialist Party (in common usage frequently abbreviated to "Nazi")

**NSKK, Nationalsozialistisches Kraftfahrkorps**, National Socialist motorized Corps of the SA

**NSKOV, Nazionalsozialistische Kriegsopferversorgung**, National Socialist Welfare Organization for the War Disabled

**Ob.d.H., Oberbefehlshaber des Heeres**, Commander in Chief of the Army

**Ob.d.L., Oberbefehlshaber der Luftwaffe**, Commander in Chief of the Luftwaffe (*q.v.*)

**Ob.d.M., Oberbefehlshaber der Marine**, Commander in Chief of the Navy

**Obergruppenführer, SA and SS rank** approximately equivalent to General of Infantry

**Oberpolizeirat**, senior rank in the Austrian Police

**Oberpräsident**, senior administrative official in a province of Prussia

**Oberregierungsrat**, see under *höherer Dienst*

**OKH, Oberkommando des Heeres**, High Command of the Army

**OKM, Oberkommando der Marine**, High Command of the Navy

**O.Qu., Oberquartiermeister**, Assistant Chief of the General Staff (see also vol. IV of this Series, Appendix I, Table B)

**O.R.R., Oberregierungsrat**, a grade in the *höherer Dienst* (*q.v.*)

**Ortsgruppe**, sub-division of an NSDAP *Kreis*; see also under *Hoheitsträger*

**Ortsgruppenleiter**, see under *Hoheits-träger*

**Ossa Vermittlungs und Handelsgesellschaft**, an agency controlled by the Reich Government (also operating under the cover name of Excelsior G.m.b.H.), founded in 1926 and engaged in financing and promoting German economic interests in territories with German minorities, especially in the so-called "ceded terri-

tries" (i.e., ceded under the Treaty of Versailles). The agency was supervised by the German Foreign Ministry through Kult. B.

**P., Presseabteilung**, the Press Department of the German Foreign Ministry

**Pol., Politische Abteilung**, Political Department of the German Foreign Ministry after May 1936; subdivided according to geographical areas, each designated by a Roman numeral, e.g. Pol. VIII (see Appendix I)

**Promi, (Reichs-) Propagandaministerium**, Reich Ministry of Propaganda

**R., Rechtsabteilung**, Legal Department of the German Foreign Ministry after May 1936

**Rechtsanwalt**, lawyer

**Referat**, section, division within a department of a German Ministry

**Referat Deutschland**, the division for internal German affairs in the Foreign Ministry

**Referent**, according to context: (1) head of a *Referat* (*q.v.*); (2) drafting officer; (3) personal assistant (*persönlicher Referent*) to the head of a department; (4) specialist or expert for a particular country or subject; (5) responsible officer

**Regierungsrat**, grade in the *höherer Dienst* (*q.v.*)

**Registermark**, indicates one of the several types of partially restricted German currency. Under the Third Standstill Agreement of February 1933 the sums repaid to Germany's creditors were to be deposited with the *Reichsbank* and inscribed in a special register, thus giving rise to the term *Registermark*; they were blocked for five years although they could be used under certain specified conditions. See also *Sondermark*

**Reich**, Germany (i.e., the Third Reich, Hitler's Germany)

**"Reichsanzeiger"**, **"Deutscher Reichsanzeiger und Preussischer Staatsanzeiger"**, official gazette published daily in Berlin

**Reichsbank**, German National Bank, founded 1875, reorganized 1924



**Reichsdeutsche**, Reich Germans, i.e., those Germans who were Reich citizens, used usually with reference to those living outside the frontiers of the Reich; see also **Volksdeutsche**

**"Reichsgesetzblatt"**, "Reich Law Gazette"; official publication of the Reich Ministry of the Interior giving the text of new laws, decrees and regulations in Part I, and of treaties and agreements with foreign States in Part II

**Reichsland**, designation given to the territory which Germany annexed from France in 1871 and which was placed under an Imperial Governor (*kaiserlicher Statthalter*) as distinct from being a **Land** (*q.v.*)

**Reichsleitung**, Supreme Directorate of the NSDAP, its members being styled **Reichsleiter**, the highest rank in the Party

**Reichsnährstand**, Reich Food Estate, compulsory association of all persons engaged in agriculture, horticulture and fisheries; responsible for food production and marketing

**Reichsstatthalter**, Reich Governor, representative of the Reich in a **Land** (*q.v.*) exercising large powers of administrative control under the Law issued April 7, 1933

**Reichswehr**, lit. "Reich Defence", the official designation of the German armed forces 1919-1935, consisting of the national army (*Reichsheer*) and navy (*Reichsmarine*) effective command over which was exercised until May 1935 respectively by the Army Command (*Heeresleitung*) and the Naval Command (*Marineleitung*) in the Reichswehr Ministry; in March 1935 the armed forces were renamed the **Wehrmacht**

**Ritter von**, title of nobility in Austria and Bavaria until 1918, equivalent to a knight

**Rk.**, **Reichskanzlei**, Reich Chancellery, office of the German Chancellor

**RM**, **Reichsmark**, the unit of German currency; see also **Registermark** and **Sondermark**

**RM**, **Reichsminister**, Reich Minister, any member of the Reich Cabinet,

but in Foreign Ministry documents usually refers to the Reich Foreign Minister

**SA**, **Sturmabteilungen der NSDAP**, Storm Troops of the NSDAP (Brown Shirts)

**SK**, **Gruppe für Seekonferenzen**, Group for Naval Conferences, an office directly subordinate to the C. in C., Navy; dealt with matters in which foreign affairs impinged upon individual decisions of Naval policy

**Sondermark**, lit. "Special Mark", indicates one of the types of partially restricted German currency. This could be paid into special accounts (*Sonderkontos*), which certain foreign banks of issue maintained at the **Reichsbank**, by German importers to cover the difference between the amount of foreign exchange allocated for a given business transaction and the full value of the goods imported. As opportunity arose the foreign bank of issue would sell these **Sondermark**, which could be used for practically every purpose inside Germany, to importers of German goods, and the proceeds would then be credited to the exporter to whom the debt was due

**Sperrmark**, lit. "blocked marks", one of the types of restricted German currency; see also under **Register- and Sondermark**

**Stahlhelm**, lit. "Steel Helm", a German nationalist ex-Servicemen's organization founded in 1918 and transformed in March 1934 into the National Socialist League of German ex-Servicemen (*Nationalsozialistischer Deutscher Frontkämpferbund (NSDFB)*). It was dissolved by Hitler in November 1935

**SS**, **Schutzstaffeln der NSDAP**, élite corps of the NSDAP, used also for police purposes (Black Guards)

**Staatsrat**, State Counsellor, title given to a member of the State Council (*Staatsrat*), the advisory body of the Prussian Ministry of State or to a member of the Upper House of the Austrian Federal Republic (*Staatsrat*)



**St., S., Staatssekretär**, State Secretary, the highest career official in the Reich Ministry

**Sturmabannführer**, SA and SS rank approximately equivalent to Major

**TA, Truppenamt**, lit. "Troops Office", one of the six principal offices for army matters in the Reichswehr Ministry. It served in effect as a German General Staff after 1920 when that name was prohibited under Article 160 of the Versailles Treaty and its head, the *Chef des Truppenamtes*, was in effect Chief of the Army General Staff. It comprised the following main departments: T1, National Defence; T2, Organization; T3, Foreign Armies (i.e., Intelligence); T4, Training. In 1935 it was redesignated the General Staff of the Army (*Generalstab des Heeres*).

**Truppführer**, SA and SS rank approximately equivalent to Sergeant

**VDA, Volksbund für das Deutschtum im Ausland**, League for the German Community Abroad, an organization with the aim of strengthening the national groups outside the frontiers of the Reich, which in the course of 1933 came under the control of the NSDAP

**volksdeutsch**, ethnic German; refers to the ethnic Germans (*Volksdeutsche*), i.e., persons of German stock but not of Reich nationality living out-

side the frontiers of the Reich; see also **Reichsdeutsche**

**Volksgemeinschaft**, lit. "folk community", i.e., community of persons of common stock and sharing the same political ideals

**Volksgenosse** (pl. **Volksgenossen**), lit. "folk comrades", i.e., fellow-Germans, usually applied to members of the German minority groups abroad

**Volkstag**, the representative assembly of the Free City of Danzig

**W, Abteilung W[irtschaft]**, the Economic Department and after May 1935 the Economic Policy Department (*Handelspolitische Abteilung*) of the German Foreign Ministry

**Wehrmacht**, lit. "defence force", the armed forces of the Reich; see also **Reichswehr**

**Wehrmachtsamt**, Armed Forces Office, one of the principal offices of the Reich War Ministry, which dealt with joint matters of the armed forces, liaison between them, relations of the Reich War Ministry with other Reich Ministries and the Party

**W.St.b., Wehrwirtschaftsstab**, Economic Defence Staff of the Reich War Ministry, i.e., the staff dealing with economic planning for military purposes

**zu**, further to, in connexion with: where this precedes the file number it indicates that the previous papers on the subject have this number



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